

Start of From generation to generation :

AR 5265

Sys #: 000197198

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE
Center for Jewish History

15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

Phone: (212) 744-6400
Fax: (212) 988-1305
Email: lbaeck@lbi.cjh.org
URL: <http://www.lbi.org>

AR 5265

From generation to generation: Max-Chen family - Martin Malone

A 40/1

AR 5265

bx A 40/1

FROM GENERATION
TO GENERATION

THE FAMILY OF
MARX-COHN

*Traced from the Mid-16th Century
to the close of the 18th Century*

by Martin Mainzer

FROM GENERATION
TO GENERATION

THE FAMILY OF
MARX-COHN

*Traced from the Mid-16th Century
to the close of the 18th Century*

by Martin Mainzer

*In loving memory of my parents
Hugo and Herta Mainzer*



This is the first in a series of contemplated books recounting the
history of the ancestral families of my children. M.M.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	i
RABBI MOSHE	1
RABBI MORDECAI BEN MOSHE	2
ASSUR MARX	3
Historical Background	
Court Jew	
Community Founder and Leader	
Scholar and Patron of Scholars	
Patriarch	
MARX ASSUR	24
AARON MARX	30
GOETZ MARX	31
REFLECTIONS	32
On Court Jews, Protected Jews and Jewish Emancipation	
THE QUEST FOR OUR ROOTS	35
TRANSCRIPTS OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO	
ASSUR MARX	38
NOTES AND COMMENTS TO THE TEXT	41
ADOLF BERNHARD MARX	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY	56
GENEALOGICAL TABLES	62
Marx-Cohn Family Direct Lineage to 1983	
Adolf Bernhard Marx' Common Ancestry with Cohn Family	

FOREWORD

The roots of my mother's paternal family (with which this history is concerned) are in the German Rhineland, specifically in and around Cologne, home of our first known ancestor in the 16th century. Later, the scene shifts to Halle, a city on the river Saale, about 100 miles southwest of Berlin. Here, intermittently for more than 250 years, members of our family played an important role in the Jewish community which resided there.

One of the first of two Jewish families who were granted permission to settle in Halle in 1688 (after an earlier Jewish community had been compelled to leave that town some 200 years before) was that headed by Assur Marx, our forefather.

Subsequent wars and a declining economy led to a gradual Jewish emigration from Halle, with the result that none of our forefathers remained in that city by the end of the 18th century.

It was not until 1914, when my mother, Herta Cohn, a descendant of Assur Marx, met and married my father Hugo Mainzer, who had settled in Halle in 1900, that the family returned to that city. Subsequently, Hugo Mainzer became the last freely elected president of the Halle Jewish community before its destruction by the Nazis.

Because of the unique interrelationship between our family and the Jewish community of Halle, the history of that community is an integral part of the history of our family.

For a period of some 70 years, spanning the latter part of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century, our ancestors were part of that select group known as "Court Jews" who served as bankers, suppliers, political agents and confidants to a succession of German and Austrian princes.

The name "Cohn" was adopted by the family in 1807 when the emancipation edicts issued by Napoleon required Jews to adopt surnames. Prior to that time, historians had identified the family as "Marx", as does our "family tree".

This family tree, written in Hebrew, was in the possession of my grandfather, Wilhelm Markus Cohn. He told me that there had been a written history of the family which was destroyed in a fire some time in the 1890's. He undertook to reconstruct our family tree in German on the occasion of my first birthday in 1916. Some sixty-six years later, I began to update that family tree and the writing of this family history.

Why and how I undertook the work is described in the section
"The Quest for our Roots."

The chain of our family has not been broken in over 400 years,
our family has preserved its Jewish heritage over the centuries,
albeit each generation and each individual in its own manner. I am
writing this history to honor our ancestors and in the hope that my
descendants will remain links in that chain.

Martin Mainzer
Winnetka, Illinois
1983

RABBI MOSHE (? - 1627)

The Rhineland was the home of our earliest ancestor. It is here we
find our first forefather who appears in our written family tree. He
is identified as Rabbi Moshe, the Chief Rabbi of the district of Col-
ogne, an office he held for more than forty years.

Rabbi Moshe died in 1627 in the small town of Deutz which is to-
day a suburb of Cologne. The Jews who formerly lived in Cologne
had been exiled by that municipality in 1424, whereupon Deutz had
become the seat of the Chief Rabbi for the district. In the towns sur-
rounding Cologne, such as Bonn and Deutz, the Jews found refuge
under the protection of the archbishops. While Jews were denied the
right to live in Cologne, they were permitted to trade in the city dur-
ing the daylight hours and were also able to continue to bury their
dead in the centuries-old Jewish cemetery in Cologne.

There is very little information available about Rabbi Moshe. We
do know he was a rabbi in the Cologne district. He is remembered in
the "Memorbook" of Deutz. Such books were kept by Jewish com-
munities to record and recount the history and particularly the
persecution endured by their people. These books were carefully
preserved and carried by the community whenever it was compelled
to leave a given place. At the YIVO* Institute in New York, there is a
compilation of such books by Dr. Adolf Jellinek, published in Vien-
na in 1881 under the title "Martyr und Memorbuch". On page 11 of
that compilation there is the following entry in Hebrew:

*"May G'd remember the soul of Rabbi Moshe, son of
Rabbi Mordecai in whose honor a consecration was made.
He died on the 10th of Tevet in the year 5383 and is buried
in Cologne. (English translation by Meira Mainzer.)*

The month of Tevet corresponds to the month of December, and
the year 5383 to 1623. However, our family tree gives the date of the
death of Rabbi Moshe as 1627. This could be an error caused by a
faulty translation from the Hebrew into the German version of the
family tree.

In the "History of the Jews of Cologne" by Kober (Jewish
Publication Society, 1940) there is mention of a Rabbi Moses ben
Meir who is described in 1616 as a member of the Beth Din (Jewish
Court of Rabbis). This may well be our forefather Rabbi Moshe.

*Yiddischer Visenschaftlicher Institut.

RABBI MORDECAI (? - 1681)

We know from the family tree that Rabbi Moshe had a son named Mordecai² who died in 1681 in Koenigswinter, a small town near Bonn. My grandfather identifies him as Rabbi Mordecai. It is not clear whether Mordecai functioned as a spiritual leader or a "dayan" (a judge of a rabbinical court), or if the title "Rabbi" was simply a sign of respect. In any event, we do know that four generations of his descendants went by the same title; virtually all of them displayed the qualities of learned men, above and beyond the considerable wordly successes they achieved.

We have no record of whom Mordecai married, but we do know he had four sons and four daughters. The family tree tells us all four daughters and one son never married. His second son (who did marry) was Assur Marx, a most remarkable man and an outstanding figure among our forefathers.

ASSUR MARX (1654 - 1736)

The founder of the modern Jewish community in Halle was Assur Marx, that second son of Mordecai. He was a "Court Jew" at the courts of several German princes and especially to Frederick Augustus I, ruler¹ of Saxony (later also King of Poland reigning as Augustus II or Augustus the Strong).

Assur Marx was a patron of Jewish scholars and writers; he was himself a scholar and a cultivated man, respected by Jews and Gentiles alike.

Historical Background

To understand the remarkable life and achievements of Assur Marx and of his equally distinguished son, Marx Assur, it is necessary to comprehend their historical background — their milieu which was the city of Halle and the state of Brandenburg (Prussia) in the latter part of the 17th century and early 18th century — as well as an understanding of the phenomenon of the "Court Jew".

Historians believe that around 975 C.E., an important Jewish community flourished in what is today Halle. The great natural resource of the region was its salt mines and reports from Jewish travelers of that era refer to the local Jews as owners of salt works and traders in salt.*

During the Middle Ages, Jews had become the "property" of the rulers of states, and found themselves pawns in the ongoing struggles between those rulers and local authorities. It was the ruler's practice to protect his Jews, to tax them, to rob and then expel them, only to call them back in a never ending cycle.

In Halle, the Jews lived under the protection of the Archbishop of Magdeburg, the temporal as well as spiritual ruler of Halle. Here, the Jews suffered the same fate as their fellow Jews throughout Europe — protection and settlement, followed by expulsion; return to settle once more, only to be expelled again.

In 1493, the Archbishop banned all Jews from the archdiocese; they were not to return for 200 years.** On September 30, 1692, a magistrate in Halle reported to his sovereign, the ruler of Branden-

*In our own times, the maternal grandfather of my sister Elisabeth's husband owned the monopoly in Halle for the distribution of certain types of salt. The wealth derived in that manner helped my parents and sister to escape to South America in 1939.

**The 15th century proved to be the worst of all centuries for the Jews of Europe. It was the time of the Inquisition and the expulsion in 1492 of the proud Jewry of Spain; it was a time when Jews were compelled to wear demeaning clothing — the pointed "Jew hat" and the yellow spot. Not until the 20th century were the horrors of the 15th surpassed.

burg, that four "Schutzjuden" (protected Jews) lived in Halle. These were the families of Solomon Israel, Assur Marx (our forefather), Jacob Levin and Bernd Wolff. What brought these Jews to Halle?

Friedrich Wilhelm, then ruler of Brandenburg, proved to be an enlightened prince. Part of his youth had been spent in Holland where he had observed the great contributions, both cultural and economic, made to that tolerant land by its Jews. Friedrich Wilhelm undertook to rectify the ravages of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) which had devastated Europe and killed one-third of its population. Determined to overcome the limitations of the agricultural economy of his state and to promote commerce and industry, he invited and encouraged Jews to settle in his realm.

The city of Halle is situated at the southwestern corner of Prussia and only a few miles from Leipzig. Leipzig had been a center of commerce for centuries and the largest town in adjacent Saxony. To develop Halle as a competitive commercial center, Friedrich Wilhelm and his successors encouraged Jews to settle there, as well as Huguenots (French Protestants who had been severely persecuted in Catholic France).

At the time of this Jewish settlement, the Pietists, a Christian denomination which respected Jews as the Chosen People, became a dominant force in the life of Halle. The Pietists were knowledgeable in Hebrew; their religious teachings demanded social action and they engaged their neighbor Jewish scholars in lively debate, largely in the hope of effecting conversions. At any rate, through the efforts and influence of the Pietists, a university was established in Halle in 1694. It quickly became a magnet and haven for liberal and progressive academicians.

The liberal attitude of the University and the protective stance of the Prussian monarchs created an inviting atmosphere which attracted Jewish settlers as well as Jewish students. While most European universities of the period refused admittance to Jews, the doors were opened at the University of Halle. Its first Jewish student was admitted in 1695.⁴ (A son of Marx Assur graduated in 1741 as a doctor of medicine.)

The Jews who came to Halle were able to settle freely among the non-Jewish residents of the town; there was no enforced ghetto. However, most of the Jews chose to live in the district called "Grosser Berlin", where a synagogue was eventually built. The site continued to be occupied by a synagogue until its destruction during the "Kristallnacht" in 1938.

With this historical background in mind, let us turn now to the phenomenon of the "Court Jew" or "Court Factor", an explana-

tion of which is essential to our understanding of the life and achievements of our forefathers. The absolute ruler of the 17th century required a special intermediary with unique talents in order to effect a "change from the medieval economy to a money and credit economy, from traditionalism to capitalism, from scholastic theories and canonical law to natural law, from a corporative society to one composed of autonomous individuals".*

The history of the city of Halle illustrates how rulers called in Jews to develop trade and relied on a select group of Jews to help achieve the modernization of the economy. Last, but not least, these special Jews provided the credit required for the maintenance of armies and for the support of the rulers' luxurious lifestyles.

The ruler frequently found himself and his attempts at modernization opposed by the aristocracy and the general population. As a result, the privileged Court Jew became the ruler's confidant and diplomatic courier, as well as his banker, and the supplier of his luxuries and armies.

All this had a profound effect on the Court Jew. One historian has described him as the "first emancipated Jew". Selma Stern-Taubler in her book, "*The Court Jew*", pictures him as follows:

Just as the nobility of those days looked to the Court for guidance and carefully followed its rules, regulations and manners, so the Court Jews in turn modeled their life and attitude on that aristocratic society. They took over the fondness for ceremony and formality, for ostentation and display, for costly buildings and rich dress, for courtly manners and speech, for titles and marks of rank... They also derived from the aristocracy a certain generosity, breadth of outlook and spirit of noblesse oblige... Like the nobles who led lives of magnificence in their castles surrounded by spacious gardens, so the Court Jews built or bought stately homes in which they reigned in patriarchal fashion in the midst of their numerous employees, clerks, servants, business friends, Talmudic scholars and yeshiva students...

*One thing, however, we do know: The moment the Court Jew found himself among his fellow Jews, prayed in the Synagogue or read the Bible or Talmud, the world of the Court disappeared for him. He was no longer troubled by such things as French subsidies, bribes for Polish nobles, ** the conquest of foreign crowns, or the provision*

*Selma Stern-Taubler, "*The Court Jew*"

**The Court Jew Behrend Lehmann, sponsor and business associate of Assur Marx, was instrumental in gaining the Polish crown for Augustus of Saxony. See Note 6

of hungry armies. Here in his own community were other laws and customs than those of the Court. Wealth and friendship of princes could not have assured him of the undivided loyalty of his co-religionists, much as they might flatter him to win his favor. In the Jewish community it was not the Court Jew who was the uncontested leader, but rather the rabbi, the scholar, the saint. It was the latter who served as the model for his community, as its advisor, as the one who managed its affairs and resolved its conflicts. If the Court Jew desired to share the veneration in which the rabbi was held, he too, had to acquire rabbinical and talmudic knowledge; if he desired to be worthy of his important position in the community, his character and conduct had to be above reproach.*

As we return to take up the history of our family, we will find that many of the traits ascribed by historians to Court Jews in general were shared by those two Court Jew ancestors — Assur Marx and his son, Marx Assur.

Assur Marx — Court Jew

Assur Marx (the name by which he is identified in official documents) was born on the fifth day of Adar 5414, which is in February of 1654. His birthplace was Emmerich, a town on the Rhine bordering on Holland. Our family tree gives his Jewish name as Asher ben Mordechai as well as Asher Cohn Maus (Marx). He married in June 1685 (on the 15th of Tamus, 5445), in the city of Hannover. There is no mention in the family tree of his wife's name or of her family. However, historical documents give her Jewish name as Gnendel, and official German documents identify her as Helena.⁷ In an era when parents betrothed their children at an early age (sometimes even before birth) and when marriage was generally consummated in the late teens, it is unusual that Assur Marx entered into marriage at the advanced age of 31. It is possible this was not his first marriage; he could well have been a widower (our family tree bears proof women all too often died in childbirth in those days).

In the late 17th century, Hannover was the seat of several influential Jewish families. Although we have no knowledge of the family of Gnendel, we know that after their marriage Assur Marx came to

*Contrast this with the attitude of the American Jewish community in our time, where neither learning nor character nor conduct appear to be prerequisites for leadership, but where the amount of money contributed to community causes is the determining factor. It is interesting to note that for 200 years (1600-1800), our family tree rarely mentions the economic successes of our ancestors, but refers to them as "rabbi", to indicate they were men of character and learning.

Halle as the representative of Behrend Lehmann, an influential and powerful Court Jew. This suggests that some sort of family relationship existed between Gnendel and the Court Jews then living in Hannover.

Under the provisions of the Westphalian peace treaty which ended the Thirty Years War, Halle had become part of Brandenburg (Prussia).⁸ Its new ruler, the liberal Friedrich Wilhelm, was eager to stimulate trade and business in his new domain.

To further that purpose, he invited Jews and Huguenots to settle there. However, the city council of Halle objected strenuously to the presence of Jews in their community. It was only in the last year of his life that Friedrich Wilhelm succeeded in settling Jews in Halle. On March 27, 1688 he issued a *Schutzbrieft* (letter of protection) to the stepson of his court jeweler which permitted him to reside in Halle together with his family, servants, and "trade-consorts". The "trade-consort" proved to be Assur Marx and his family.

This appears to date the entry of our family into Halle as the year 1688.⁹ However, our family tree shows that Marx Assur, the first son of Assur Marx, was born in Halle in 1686 (which antedates the *Schutzbrieft* by two years). There is a strong possibility our family tree may be correct. A report by a city official dated in 1690¹⁰ states that this official had handled legal disputes involving Jews and other strangers who had lived temporarily in his district for more than six years. It is therefore quite possible that Assur Marx had lived in Halle since shortly after his marriage.¹¹

When Assur Marx received permission to reside in Halle in 1688, he was already the official contractor to the Saxon army.¹² He quickly established a wide-ranging banking business, and among his customers was to be the academic community when the university was founded in Halle in 1694.

In 1692, Assur Marx applied for and received, together with his sponsor, permission to trade in neighboring counties,¹³ and on October 12, 1694 he received his own *Schutzbrieft*¹⁴, for which he paid an annual fee of eight *Thaler*. In a petition dated December 27, 1697, Behrend Lehmann informed Augustus the Strong that "his good

⁷I was intrigued by the "grandfather clause" (so common in legislation of our own time) which resulted in this change of sovereignty. The Westphalian treaty of 1648 left the territory in which Halle was located under the rule of the sovereign reigning at that time, until his death. He continued to live on for some 32 years.

⁸There is a rather unlikely notation on our family tree to the effect that Jacob, a younger brother of Assur Marx, was born in Halle in 1657. It is possible this may be a reference to the town of Halle in Westphalia, and Jacob may have been born there.

⁹For full text of this "Schutzbrieft", see the section entitled "Documents".

friend Assur Marx, protected Jew in Halle, an upright man who is well-liked, is his bookkeeper in Halle".¹²

Assur Marx, and later his son Marx Assur, continued to represent the interests of Behrend Lehmann and his family until the collapse of the Lehmann enterprises in the 1730's.*

In 1701, Assur Marx received a patent to travel in the realms of Augustus (Saxony and Poland) "unhindered and without payment of any duties". He was not required to register to attend the important annual Fair in Leipzig, nor did he or his representatives have to pay any attendance fees.**

On June 20, 1702, Assur Marx was appointed to be the supplier of coins to the mint of Saxony** and another patent similar in wording to the one granted in 1701 was issued to him on February 20, 1713.

Documents were not available to ascertain the date of Assur Marx' appointment as "Hoffaktor" to the courts of Augustus, the Saxon court and the royal Polish court. The historian Schnee believes that the wording of the patent issued in 1701 implies that Assur Marx was a Hoffaktor at that time, the historian Freudenthal comes to the same conclusion in describing the patent issued in 1713.¹³

Obtaining the title of Hoffaktor meant recognition of the fact that Assur Marx was not only the banker and supplier of the court, the mint and the army, but on occasion the counselor, confidant and diplomatic courier of his prince. The appointment carried with it considerable privileges for Assur Marx, his family, servants and associates. The most important privilege was perhaps that of unrestricted movement within the realm of Augustus.

As early as 1696, Assur Marx petitioned the court in Berlin to permit two additional Jewish families to settle in Halle as his associates. The royal court denied his petition, but in 1698 Behrend Lehmann was able to secure him two Jewish associates, albeit nephews of Lehmann and not those requested by Assur Marx.¹⁴

There are two interesting facts in these petitions. In his of 1696, Assur Marx had submitted affidavits** from the Prorektor of the University, from four well-known professors, as well as from members of the city council (who were not known for their sympathy towards Jews). All of them testified in glowing language to the ability of Assur Marx, his honesty and his willingness to be of service in the money matters; from the Prorektor came the statement that "the University has much for which to be thankful".

*See Note 6

**see Documents.

In Lehmann's petition there is this interesting statement: "Assur Marx was compelled to travel a great deal in the pursuit of his business, which left a great burden on his wife, as she had to conduct his business in his absence"; thus, relief was sought in the person of additional associates both to lighten her business burdens as well as to enable Assur Marx to spend more time at home.*

Assur Marx was not to be free of difficulties. In May, 1699 a warrant was issued for his arrest, but it was annulled shortly thereafter. However, on May 19, 1699, it is recorded he posted bail, apparently as the result of a charge of receiving stolen goods. He was completely exonerated of any wrongdoing by the court on February 16, 1701, and the bail was returned to him. To raise that bail, Assur Marx was required to submit a listing of his assets and his debts. This listing is preserved in the Prussian Secret State Archives and reads as follows:

Specification of My Net Worth

1. Outstanding receivables and notes	1525 Rt.
2. On the Wogauischen house**	2500 Rt.
3. Silver approximately	1500 Rt.
4. Various mortgages approximately	1000 Rt.
5. Merchandise approximately	1000 Rt.
6. My library	1000 Rt.
	8525 Rt.
I owe the widow Berghorns	400 Rt.
I owe Jakob Levin and Bernd Wolff	1000 Rt.

Signed: Assur Marx¹⁵

There will be more later about the significance of the listing of the library as a major asset of Assur Marx' net worth.

The arrest of Assur Marx as the alleged receiver of stolen goods apparently was the basis of slanderous remarks in a blatantly anti-Semitic book published in 1714.¹⁶ In a chapter entitled *Thieving Jews*, the author writes as follows:

Assur Marx, who already in the nineties of the preceding century bought stolen goods and who attracted thieves from all over is known in the annals of Thievery in Dresden, as Lips Tulian and other robbers find their way with stolen silver and precious coins from Dresden over Leipzig to Halle, there to the fence, the Jew Assur Marx. In his absence, his wife will make the pay-off.

The foregoing is a free translation from the stilted German of the time. This slander has provoked anger and disgust among his

*See "Documents"

**Presumably this represents a mortgage.

torians, particularly on the part of Max Freudenthal.¹⁷ Both he and Professor Guido Kisch have pointed out that the appointment of Assur Marx to the court of Augustus could never have taken place if there had been the slightest doubt about his integrity. Moreover, it would have been impossible for him to have been the leader and representative of the Jewish community.

Still another difficult legal matter involved Assur Marx in a dispute with two "protected" Jews (Schutzjuden) — Jakob Levin and Bernd Wolff, heads of families whose residency permits identify them as the third and fourth Jewish families to settle in Halle.

Jakob Levin and Bernd Wolff were suppliers to the mint of Sachsen-Zeitz, a neighboring principality.* In 1695 they were accused and shortly imprisoned for cheating on the quality of coins delivered to the mint. They in turn blamed Assur Marx for delivering substandard coins to them. The case dragged on through 1698 and apparently was dropped based on Assur Marx's sworn affidavit that the entire matter was made up of unfounded and unsubstantiated allegations.

It is of interest to note that in the Middle Ages rulers would lease the right of minting to "mintmasters". Jews customarily carried out this prestigious and profitable enterprise. They either served as suppliers of precious metals for the mint or they were the distributors of the coins.

Toward the close of the Middle Ages, the Jews had been replaced in the role of mintmaster by Christian bankers and merchants, but once again with the advent of the absolute monarch in the 17th and 18th centuries, Jews became prominent, not only as suppliers of precious metals but also as mintmasters.

It was not uncommon for them to be accused of cheating. More often than not, it was a convenient way for unscrupulous state officials to renege on the just debts owed to the Jewish contractors and/or to shift the blame for debased currencies from themselves to the Jews. These accusations fanned anti-Semitic feelings in the populace, particularly toward the close of the 18th century.

Like most Court Jews, our ancestors were involved in the precious metals trade. Assur Marx was not only a supplier of jewelry to the princes he served but acted also as a contractor for the mint of Saxony, a major German state of the period. While documents cited by Professor Kisch describe Assur Marx as a contractor, it is not clear whether he served as the mintmaster. The father-in-law of his son Marx Assur was also a supplier of silver to the Dutch mint.

Considering the precarious situation and vulnerability which con-

*Years later, Assur Marx was appointed "Hoffaktor" to the Duke of Sachsen-Zeitz.

fronted Jews in this trade, it is a tribute to the reputation, skill and integrity of our forefathers that their legal involvements in connection with their activities as precious metal dealers were so minimal.

It is also of interest that while Assur Marx and Bernd Wolff were in dispute they headed the Halle Jewish community together and presented a common front in communal matters as will be seen elsewhere in this chapter.

During the years 1700 and 1702, Assur Marx found himself engaged in a lawsuit with a Schutzjude in Berlin, in connection with a debt owed to Assur Marx. The society in which Assur Marx lived was given to litigation and he was involved in more than a few legal battles, as will be related later in this narrative.

As we have seen, Assur Marx was a "Hoffaktor" to Augustus, ruler of Saxony and King of Poland, who was a member of the dynastic family Wettin¹⁸. Branches of that family ruled not only Saxony but the territory of Thuringia as well. Assur Marx was accredited a "Hoffaktor" to the courts of the Dukes of Sachsen-Zeitz and Sachsen-Weida of the Thuringia branch. The indebtedness of these three families to Assur Marx grew to 154,208 Taler and 2 Groschen by 1725. Assur Marx assigned these obligations to his son and successor, Marx Assur, who subsequently arranged to have the debts repaid in installments over a period of years, with a final payment due in 1735.

Assur Marx served also as the banker for other branches of the Wettin dynastic family, as well as for other noble families of the courts.

His activities as a banker were not the only commercial pursuits of Assur Marx. He had come to Halle as a representative not only of Behrend Lehmann whose firm was engaged in far-flung diversified activities (a virtual conglomerate in today's terms), but he also represented Ruben Elias Gomperz in Halle. Gomperz was born in Emmerich in 1655, where Assur Marx had been born in 1654. Gomperz had become the primary army contractor for the Prussian rulers and one of the most influential Court Jews of his time. His representatives covered the major commercial centers of Europe even more intensively than those of Lehmann.

Assur Marx made full use of his connections to take care of other family members. In 1704, his brother-in-law, Samuel Lochheimer, was appointed "Hoffaktor" to Duke Moritz Wilhelm of Sachsen-Weida at the request of Assur Marx. In 1705, two nephews of Assur Marx received "Schutzbriebe", permitting them to settle in Duke Moritz Wilhelm's capital, Schleusingen. The influence of Assur Marx was reflected in the granting of additional Schutzbriebe, as testified in these words of the historian Schnee:

Assur Marx must have been very influential with Duke Moritz Wilhelm; all he had to do was petition, and his petition was granted.¹⁹

Assur Marx — Community Founder and Leader

The "Schutzbefehl" obtained by Assur Marx from the ruler of Prussia* in 1694 established his legal status. This coveted document which gave protection and security to the Jew of the 17th and 18th centuries in the German states, established his right of residency; it prescribed the nature of his commercial activities and the territory in which they could be exercised. Moreover, it assured him of the protection of the sovereign, both physically and materially; it gave him the right to appeal to the courts and also defined his obligations. It set the annual fee (eight Thaler) for the privilege and made it contingent upon his lawful conduct (in some cases even prescribing the amount of interest a Jew could charge). Finally, the Schutzbefehl named those persons who were included in the privileged status, such as family members, servants, trade associates, and scholars who might be engaged as tutors to the children. Without the guarantees of the Schutzbefehl, life for the Jew could be precarious, subject to the whims of local authorities and more often than not, he faced expulsion and the prospect of wandering from place to place.^{**}

While the Schutzbefehl established certain rights for the Jew, he required something more — the need to be affiliated with and to be a vital part of his community. Religious observances demanded this participation, as reflected in the requirement of the "minyan" (religious quorum). The sense of being "different" and alienated from his gentile neighbors also made it necessary. Furthermore, early in the 1700's the Jews of Germany felt an obligation to provide a home for Jewish scholars, whose yeshivas and entire communities had been wiped out at the time by a series of pogroms in neighboring Poland.

In 1704, the twelve Jewish families numbering 70 to 100 souls then living in Halle under the protection of their Schutzbefehle, petitioned the King for the formal establishment of a Jewish community in the city. One might ask why such a petition was required and why the Jews of Halle simply did not set about forming a congregation. The answers lie in the nature of the times. The social order had no concept of the formation of voluntary associations. Society during the Middle Ages segregated its population by birth status and occupa-

*Brandenburg became the Kingdom of Prussia in 1701.

**In one of his plays, the German dramatist Schiller, describes roving bands of Jewish robbers.

tion, and provided each group with its own special corporate structure. The absolute State of the 17th and 18th centuries not only retained but intensified this categorization in its determination to control its subjects. Since there were no state-recognized "communities", it is also apparent that religious organizations (other than those recognized by the State) were unauthorized, thus making it difficult for the Jews to observe their ritual laws.

It is of more than passing interest that even before the Hallenser Jews had submitted their petition for the legal formation of a congregation, Assur Marx had already acquired land for use as a Jewish burial ground. Jews were not permitted to own real estate, but on June 21, 1692 Assur Marx was able to sign a contract which gave him ownership of a "garden" for the purpose of burying Jews domiciled in Halle. The purchase price was recorded as 65 Thaler; the yearly real estate tax was fixed at 2 Thaler, along with other assessments by a variety of local authorities, including the relief fund of a local church.

Thereafter, Assur Marx improved a cottage located in the "garden-cemetery"; it appears he intended the cottage as housing for a gardener and perhaps for other servants. He was promptly sued by the three Jewish families living at the time in Halle on the ground the use of the cottage for human habitation violated the sanctity of the cemetery.

The court found in favor of the plaintiffs, pointing out that the property was sold to Assur Marx expressly for the purpose of enabling the Jews of Halle to bury their dead in strict accordance with the prescribed ritual. This, the court contended, placed Assur Marx in a fiduciary capacity with respect to the land for all the Jews living in Halle. However, the court advised him he had a right to ask his fellow Jews to contribute to the easing of the financial burden he had assumed. He was permitted to keep his garden cottage, but with the proviso it could be occupied only by "honorable and reputable Christians, under no circumstances by circumlocutory and unprivileged Jews". The proviso indicates that from time to time privileged Jews may have sheltered their more unfortunate brethren who had been unable to obtain a Schutzbefehl or residency permit.²⁰

The cemetery established by Assur Marx in 1692 was to exist until 1937. As a boy I used to roam that old cemetery with my boyhood companion Heiner Kohmann. We searched in vain for the grave of Assur Marx, but the weathered stones could no longer provide any reliable identification.

The cemetery was condemned in 1937 in connection with an urban renewal program which had been in the planning stage before the town came under the Nazi regime.

My father was involved in seeing to it that the graves and head stones as far as they could be identified, were transferred to a new cemetery. Apparently, a small portion of the old cemetery which was not required for public buildings under the renewal plan, was sold to a private investor. In 1951, my father received a letter from the family of the purchaser, pleading with him to dissuade the tiny newly formed Jewish community from asking for the return of the land. I do not recall the answer given by my father; I would guess he ignored the letter.*

A major reason prompting the Jewish families of Halle to petition the King to be recognized as a community was their desire to acquire a building for use as a house of worship. When there were only a handful of Jewish families living in Halle, the required daily worship (three times a day) was held in individual homes, but on holidays and particularly on the High Holy Days, services were "mostly in the house of Assur Marx".²² This eventually led to complaints by city officials. From the documents of the time, it is apparent that the city was not happy with the decision of the King to settle Jews in Halle; citizens and officials alike took every opportunity to complain and point out violations of the conditions of the privileges under which Jews were permitted to reside in Halle.

The petition addressed to the King regarding recognition as a community was signed by all twelve Jewish families then living in Halle. The second line of signatures is that of "Assur Marcus and his son-in-law". The petition is dated at Berlin. This would indicate that representatives of the Jewish community must have presented it in person to the royal chancellery. As Assur Marx was one of the pioneer Jewish settlers in Halle, there is little doubt he was one of the presenters.

The response to the petition took the form of a remarkable document, described by historians** as one of the most liberal and enlightened statements of its time. It granted the privileged Jews of Halle the right to travel and trade freely in the province of Magdeburg. It gave them permission to acquire a building for use as a house of worship and to bring in teachers for the instruction of their children. It made clear they were subject only to the jurisdiction of the provincial authorities and not to that of the county or city. With respect to the formation of the congregation, all religious disputes (and there were destined to be plenty of these) were to be adjudicated by the elders and a rabbi, who were to be elected and who had the power of assessment. To enforce their jurisdiction, the elders

*See Note 21 for other of our ancestors who were involved in establishing cemeteries.

**Stern-Taubler and Kisch

had the right to impose fines and, in extreme cases, to order banishment.

To be a Jew meant to be a member of the Jewish community. One could not be a Jew and not belong. The Jewish community was, in fact, a quasi-public institution with its own legislative body and the power to levy taxes on its constituents. This remained true in Halle, as in all of Germany, for well over 250 years until the Jewish communities were destroyed by Nazi barbarism.

The 1704 document also conferred the privilege of the Schutzbrief on the children of privileged Jews. A widow could inherit the Schutzbrief and transfer it to her new husband. The Jewish community took on the responsibility of transmitting the payment of assessments on all Jews to the royal treasury. One of these was the fee of eight Thaler annually for the privilege of the Schutzbrief.

A curious provision is included in the document to the effect "no other Jews shall join the ones now residing in Halle, they shall remain at the same number, which is already enough". This stipulation was included at the specific request of the Hallenser Jews themselves, and they would fight vigorously in the years to come to enforce it. Our forefather led the fight, but why?

The reasons are complex and contrary to Jewish tradition, which may be worth a historical look at this point.

Jews have always been known to fight for the rights of their fellow Jews. Court Factors, who had considerable influence on the rulers with whom they were associated, were exemplary in this respect. They frequently fought hard and courageously to prevent the expulsion of Jews; they fought doggedly to obtain residency permits for their fellow Jews (as Assur Marx had done in the Dukedom of Sachsen-Weida). It was a Court Jew in Berlin whose persistence made possible the settlement of Jews in Halle in 1688. It was Behrend Lehmann whose efforts opened Saxony to Jews. Saxony, after the Reformation, had become a rigid Protestant state which had expelled Jews and made life difficult for Catholics. It was through Behrend Lehmann's unremitting efforts that the Saxon Court permitted Jews to settle in Dresden, the capital.

One of the greatest achievements of the Court Jews occurred in 1744. On December 18 of that year, Queen Maria Theresa of the Hapsburg Empire decided that "for weighty reasons" all Jews must leave the city of Prague by the 31st of December, and that thereafter no Jews were to be permitted to live in Bohemia. The Jewish community in Prague was one of the oldest in Europe and a center for Jewish learning and Jewish wealth.

In just a few days after the order of expulsion was issued, the Court Jews of Germany and Austria mounted a campaign to help

their threatened fellow Jews of Prague. Their efforts were marvelously coordinated. They appealed to various princes; their connections to cardinals and archbishops were put to good use; they threatened to cut off all credit to the debt-ridden empire of Maria Theresa, and they made it amply clear what a profound effect a disruption of commerce and industry would have on all sorts of principalities, if not all of Europe.

Interestingly, the Court Jews did not plead for pity for their fellow religionists in Prague. They proclaimed that human beings everywhere had inalienable rights, that all religious creeds must be permitted to exist without persecution, and that it was one of the first duties of statesmen and rulers to alleviate human misery.

These remarkable views were aired by virtually every one of the 200 Court Jews in Central Europe some 40 years before the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence. There is little doubt in my mind that our forefather Marx Assur, son of Assur Marx, who was then not only Court Factor to the King of Poland and Saxony but also to the King of Sweden and to a number of lesser principalities, was among the solid front of Court Jews.

Their efforts proved to be successful. In 1748, the edict of Maria Theresa was rescinded, and the Bohemian Jews, nearly destitute after their expulsion, returned to the city of Prague, to their magnificent synagogues and the graves of their saints. It should be added, however, that the Jews of Prague obligated themselves to pay a substantial amount to the Queen's treasury for her "act of grace".

With the foregoing in mind, how can we reconcile the enlightened attitude of Jews in general and Court Jews in particular, with the puzzling request of the Hallenser Jews to restrict the settlement of additional Jews in Halle?

We have seen that the Jews of Halle had assumed the responsibility for all members of their community, including the collection for the State of various taxes and assessments. It is understandable that it was in the best interest of the existing Jewish community to keep out "undesirable elements". But I suspect there was a stronger and more selfish motive and that was purely and simply to bar competition. Again and again, in briefs of the elders of the community, there appear statements to the effect times were not what they used to be and that opportunities for newcomers were seriously limited. It is apparent that cupidity had overcome the Jewish tradition for compassion.

While the Jewish elders in Halle frequently opposed the settlement of additional Jews in the town, the royal court in Berlin often overruled their objections. One incident in which our ancestor

Assur Marx prevailed is detailed as follows.

Elias Markus, son-in-law of Jakob Levin, one of the early Jewish settlers, requested permission to reside in Halle and offered 100 Dukats to the royal treasury to obtain that privilege. The other protected Jews in Halle vigorously opposed the request, partly and perhaps legitimately because of the questionable reputation of the applicant. From the 10th of August 1705 to November 3, 1705, requests from Elias Markus and opposing briefs signed, among others, by Assur Marx, went back and forth between Halle and Berlin. In the end, the royal treasury concurred with the elders of the Halle community who gave their own 100 Dukats in return for denying residence to Elias Markus.

In spite of the repeated attempts of the resident elders to bar additional Jews, the community in Halle grew to 39 families in 1725 and eventually to 50 families in 1750, with a total population of some 350 souls. Much of this growth can be attributed not to the influx of new settlers but to the granting of the Schutzbrevi to the children of protected Jews as they came of age and formed their own families.

The consciences of the Jewish elders of Halle (who included our ancestor) must have bothered them, or perhaps they had been strongly challenged. At any rate, they requested of the Chief Rabbi of Prague an opinion as to the moral validity of barring additional Jews from Halle. A response from Chief Rabbi David Oppenheim dated April 8, 1705 (14 Nissan 5465) was received by the elders. The original of the document in Hebrew is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, England.

The opinion is addressed to the "men of the holy congregation of Halle under the rule of the mighty king of Prussia and great prince of Brandenburg". In flowery language, the sage rabbi and his colleagues not only agreed with the elders and condoned their position, but pointed out that it was their duty to protect the King's realm from undesirable and irresponsible elements. The scriptures, the Talmud and Mishna are cited in support of the opinion which is signed not only by the Chief Rabbi but also by "Jacob, son of the exalted Rabbi-Prince Josef, whose light may shine", "Mathatias Lieberman from Cracow", and "Sechariah Mendel Spira".*

There is historically a curious ambivalence among Jews in their relationships to one another. Assur Marx was an influential man who in common with other Court Jews used that influence to obtain civil rights for fellow Jews. He was also a devoted religious scholar and a sponsor of Talmudic publications. Nevertheless, he opposed

*See Note 23 as to Rabbi David Oppenheim and his probable connection to Assur Marx.

the settlement of Jews in his own town unless he approved of them.

Hundreds of years later, I myself have experienced that same ambivalence. When I was a child, the Hallenser community had a special fund to provide train fare and subsistence to "Ostjuden" (eastern Jews, largely from Poland) for the purpose of diverting them to Leipzig rather than Halle, or to Hamburg, the port of embarkation to the United States.

When I was a young man in Palestine in 1935, I went to the British consulate in Jerusalem to obtain a visa for the purpose of visiting Egypt. I was politely informed that without a substantial security deposit the visa could not be issued. The official added somewhat apologetically that this requirement was instigated by the Egyptian Jewry who feared an influx of penniless Nazi victims. There were also traces of a similar attitude among some American Jews during the period of Nazi persecution.

When it became imperative to secure entry visas to other countries in order to obtain the release of my father from the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1938, one of the prime requirements was again a substantial security deposit which the local Jewry of those countries demanded; this was especially true in Great Britain.

The Holocaust itself could not completely erase this ambivalence among Jews. During the 1970's, I served as the treasurer and an executive board member of the Jewish Family and Community Service, the major agency for settling Soviet Jews in Chicago. The leaders of American Jewry had fought hard to make emigration possible for Russian Jews. While there was an outpouring of help when emigration from Russia to the U.S. numbered only a few hundred per month, attitudes stiffened when the figure reached thousands. Heads of various Jewish service agencies became fearful lest their funds would be diverted to help resettle these courageous Russian Jews. Some American Jews felt uncomfortable with these strangers, their accents, their habits and the difficulty many of them experienced in adapting to American life and customs.

Attempts were made to restrict the Russian immigration to blood relatives, but the leadership of our agency and eventually the leadership of the Jewish Federation of Chicago stood their ground, insisting on extending help to any Russian Jew who wished to come to Chicago. This was, in large part, due to the stubborn insistence on the part of several board members who, like myself, had come to this country to escape the Nazi scourge.

During this struggle, there were repeated suggestions the Russian Jews should go to Israel. I was strongly reminded of the tactics behind the "travel fund" established by the Jewish community of Halle in the 1920's to divert the Eastern European Jews to other

towns.

So much for Jewish ambivalence through the centuries. Let us return now to the main threads of our narrative.

As might be expected of a leader of his community, the signature of Assur Marx appears on numerous documents of his period. These sometimes reflect conflicts with his fellow Jews as well as with non-Jews.

In 1700, Assur Marx joined in a petition to local authorities by all protected Jews in Halle to acquire a building to serve as a house of worship. This met with an objection by the city council because "a public Synagogue at a public place... would arouse the anger of Christians". The Jews of Halle strongly challenged such objections and received permission from the provincial government for the acquisition of a building in the district known as "Grosser Berlin". The building was actually acquired in 1701 and the right to use it as a house of worship was confirmed in the charter of 1704, and in subsequent confirmations of the charter.

As mentioned earlier, there had always been a synagogue on the site of the first building, until the destruction of the latest structure in 1938. Here, our family worshipped and here my brother and I celebrated our Bar Mitzvoth — on the same site which our ancestor, Assur Marx, had helped to acquire for a house of worship more than 230 years earlier.

The record shows that on March 6, 1698, Assur Marx joined in a complaint against a local tailor who had been fomenting unrest against the Jews of the city.

On December 18, 1713 the Jews of Halle complained bitterly to the royal court in Berlin about the actions of baptized Jews who invaded their synagogue and their homes for the purpose of stealing Hebrew books. The royal court acted promptly, ordering the provincial government to prevent any such further incursions by converted Jews, and to disregard any "false" statements and charges made by converted Jews against the Jews of Halle.

A further incident took place in 1714, when certain Hebraic books were confiscated by local authorities. The Hallenser Jews turned to Jablonsky, the respected Protestant court theologian in Berlin, for an expert opinion as to the content of the writings. Jablonsky declared that no subversive material was contained in the confiscated books, which were then ordered returned to their owners.²⁴

The most prolonged and acrimonious conflicts turned out to be those involving fellow Jews. As in many other Prussian towns, the Jewish community in Halle was dominated by the families of the Court Jews, headed by Solomon Israel, Assur Marx and Bernd Wolff. These elders of the Hallenser community also had jurisdiction

tion over several smaller Jewish communities in the province. In 1720, the three elders of Halle petitioned the government in Berlin to enforce the collection of assessments from Jews in these communities. The latter protested the "presumption" on the part of the Hallenser Court Jews. As in most such cases the authorities in Berlin sided with the elders of Halle.

This particular case offers an interesting sidelight with respect to Assur Marx. The complaint of the Jews in Magdeburg was submitted by Elias Ruben Gomperz, a son of Ruben Elias Gomperz whose substantial banking and commercial interests in Halle were represented by Assur Marx. In his petition protesting the assessment, Gomperz states: "I have been reliably informed that Assur Marx, whose name is on the document (of complaint), has no part in this action".

Elias Ruben Gomperz eventually moved to Halle where he was mysteriously murdered seventeen years later in the very house of Marx Assur, son of Assur Marx. There will be more about this later.

In Halle itself, Assur Marx and his fellow elders encountered particular difficulties with a family of evident wealth, who not only refused to pay their share of the tax assessments but also complained about the seats assigned to them in the synagogue. The archives reveal a story of petty conflict and hurt feelings, largely on the part of the recalcitrant family. The dispute about the seating assignment actually led to fistcuffs in the synagogue. Both sides sought redress by appealing to local authorities in 1721. When the dissident family attempted to establish its own "schul" (synagogue), the elders in 1729 invoked a small "bann" which denied the opposing family the right to make use of either the synagogue or cemetery in Halle. The bann was defended by the three elders in a petition to a local court on January 14, 1730. It was meant to serve as a means for bringing disobedient Jews into line.

For some eighteen years there was little questioning of the leadership role of the three elders on the part of the other Jewish families of Halle. In 1722, however, attitudes began to change. There were complaints the elders had squandered 3000 Thaler (a considerable sum in those days) of the communal treasury in travel and unnecessary expenditures. It will come as no surprise that the accused elders attributed the complaints to subversion on the part of "newly arrived elements". The complaints nevertheless led to the institution of an election to be held every three years and the names of the elders as well as the community budget had to be approved by the provincial government in Magdeburg.

Our family history shows that Assur Marx and his son Marx Assur continued as leaders of the Hallenser community throughout

their lifetimes.²⁵

Assur Marx Scholar and Patron of Scholars

In his deposition in connection with the law suit brought against him in 1699, Assur Marx listed his library as one of his assets. The historian Guido Kisch has this to say about that book collection:

It is, considering the time and circumstances of the Jews in Halle, a remarkable collection of books... This library and the famous library of the Chief Rabbi of Prague, David Oppenheim, which until our time has been preserved at the Bodleian Library at Oxford, therefore represents the first important collection of Jewish books in Germany.*

The library of Assur Marx was by no means intended for "show" or mere decor. It was incumbent as a religious duty upon a leading Jew such as he was, to study the Torah and the Talmud. When Assur Marx supported his request for trade associates with affidavits from non-Jews, Professor Christophorus Cellarius, the celebrated historian at the University of Halle, cited him as follows:

(Assur Marx) is so knowledgeable in Hebrew and rabbinical literature that he can easily debate lovers of those studies.

The reputation of Assur Marx as a scholar and the availability of his library proved to be a strong attraction for Jewish students to study in Halle. The opportunity to live with Jewish families not only satisfied the ritual requirements so important for the Jew at that time, but also frequently offered the student an opportunity to earn a few Thaler as a tutor. For those who found it desirable to pursue Talmudic studies, the library of Assur Marx made that possible. In a letter written to a fellow medical student in Frankfurt in 1702, Isaak Wallich, a tutor in the home of Assur Marx, not only cites all of the foregoing advantages, but also observes that Jewish students in Halle were permitted to wear a sword, which indicated their status as free men and the peers of all the other students.²⁶

Assur Marx and his son Marx Assur sponsored and encouraged Jewish scholars. They opened their homes and granted a stipend to Zvi Hirsch ben Asriel from Wilna, and together with two other Jewish families in other cities, underwrote the publication in 1722 of his book "Atereth Zevi" (Beautiful Crown), a commentary on the fourth section of the "Schulchan Aruch".²⁷

In 1725, there is evidence that Marx Assur paid for the publication of a new prayer book, a "Beth Tefillah", by Salomon Hanan ben

*This is the same rabbi who rendered the opinion it was the duty of the Jewish community of Halle to prevent "undesirable Jews" from settling there. See also note 23.

Yehuda Loeb.²⁸

There is a curious sidelight relating to the devotion to scholarship on the part of these ancestors of ours.

While browsing in the library of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City, I came upon a German publication by a certain Peter Deetz, which had been published by Julius Streicher, one of the most vicious and barbaric of the Nazi leaders. The title of the book is "Hofjuden" (Court Jews). The author displayed an extraordinary grasp of the subject, and I suspect that in order to get his book published under the Nazi regime, he laced it liberally with the most vitriolic anti-Semitic remarks. In the section of the book titled *Juden, Judenverbrechen und Judengesetze* ("Jews, Jewish crimes and Jewish laws"), he writes under the heading *Court Jews as Talmud Teachers*:

Reuben Meyer in Warsaw and his brother-in-law Moses Assur in Halle as well as Max Hirschel in Vienna use a not insignificant part of their profits — extracted from the population — to the promotion and teaching of the Talmud among the Jews; they buy by the thousands books of Jewish writers and distribute them free of charge in order to penetrate the culture of the host nations with Jewish immorality.

Although Deetz uses the names Moses Assur, he is evidently referring to Marx Assur. Moses Assur was a younger brother to Marx.

Assur Marx — Patriarch

Periodically, the status of the protected Jews in the Province of Magdeburg was reported to the royal chamber in Berlin. The first such report (as observed earlier) was made in 1692 when the family of Assur Marx became one of the first Jewish families to settle in Halle.

These reports, which can more properly be described as census reports, were evidently based on personal interviews. They tell us a good deal about family members. Lists of the "protected" Jews in Halle dated in the year 1713 show that in addition to Assur Marx, his oldest son, our ancestor Marx Assur, lived in Halle under his own Schutzbrev (letter of protection). So did two married daughters, one the wife of Israel Aron, and the other the wife of Moses Samuel.

In the report dated 1722 Assur Marx told the magistrate that a younger son, Moses Assur, had recently married but still lived in his father's house.

In the same report Assur Marx states that two of his children did not live in Halle; one, a married daughter, lived in Hannover, the birthplace of her mother; the other, a married son, lived in Hamburg.

The listing of protected Jews living in Halle in September of 1733 shows two additional sons-in-law of Assur Marx. They were Elias Herz Lehmann and Lehmann Nathan. It cannot be ascertained whether these two were related to Behrend Lehmann.* The family tree of the latter (compiled by a great-great-grandson) shows that Behrend Lehmann had three sons; none, however, is shown as residing in Halle, either permanently or temporarily.

Assur Marx had a total of ten children, five of them sons and five daughters.

A son-in-law, Marcus Samuel, would become the Rabbi of the Hallenser community after the death of Assur Marx (documents show he held that post in 1769). Of the grandsons of Assur Marx, a son of Marx Assur named Isaac Assur Marx, became a medical doctor in 1741, upon his graduation from the University of Halle. A son of Rabbi Marcus Samuel, named Moses Marx, would also become a doctor; he, too, was a graduate of the University in 1793. However, Moses Marx, although of rabbinical parentage, declared himself an atheist, and refused to take either the customary Hippocratic oath or the pledge of loyalty to the King in a synagogue. The University ruled that he could not obtain a license without taking the required oath in a house of worship, in his case, the synagogue.

Eventually, in 1796, Moses Marx was appointed "Communal Doctor" by the Jewish community of Halle. Jewish communities in Europe had a long tradition for employing a doctor, since health care was regarded as one of the major obligations of such communities.

The son of Moses Marx, Adolf Bernhard Marx, would become one of the foremost musicologists of the 19th century. There will be more later about this great-grandson of Assur Marx.

In the previously-referred-to report of 1722 Assur Marx described himself as an old man (he was 68), retired from his trading activities and engaged mainly in collecting his receivables. However, as late as 1730, he is recorded as a visitor to the important trade fair at Leipzig.

Assur Marx died in August of 1736, on a Friday, the 17th of Elul, 5496, after a life spanning 82 years, six months and twelve days. Gnendel, his wife and able business partner, had preceded him in death in 1725.

*The difficulty encountered in the genealogical research of Jewish families is demonstrated here. Prior to the emancipation laws promulgated by Napoleon, European Jews were without surnames. I have been able to trace all the ancestral families of my children back to about 1800. Prior to that time, only the ancestors in the Marx-Cohn family are known.

MARX ASSUR (1686-1762)

Our family tree records the birth of Marx Assur in Halle on 11 Tishri 5447, or in September 1686. The significance of his birth in Halle has been covered earlier.

On 1 Elul 5466, which corresponds to August 1706, Marx Assur married Gella, the daughter of Rabbi Loeb Birch of Amsterdam. This marriage has always intrigued me. Was there a Sephardic connection? Could we be related to descendants of the Spanish Jews who fled the Inquisition in 1492, and who made their way to the Netherlands, the most tolerant state in Europe?

After many false starts and long hours of research, I arrived at the answers to these questions. I received a letter dated August 11, 1982, from Dr. W. Chr. Pieterse, Director of the Municipal Archives of Amsterdam (Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst van Amsterdam). It provided the following information:

*23 October 1706. Publication of the banns of Marx Assur (from Halle, 20 years old, living in the Muiderstraat, his father living in Halle) and Clara Adolphus (from Amsterdam, 15 years old, living as above, assisted by her father Adolff Moses). The marriage took place in the City hall on 16 January 1707.**

The letter then proceeded to solve the mystery of the name of the bride's father which appears as Rabbi Loeb Birch on the family tree and Adolphus Moses in the marriage notice, by providing the following information:

7 July 1702. Publication of the banns of Joel Gottschalk (from Halberstadt, 21 years old, living in the Muiderstraat, assisted by his father, Gottschalk Joel) and Anna Adolphus Mosis from Amsterdam, 16 years old, living as above, assisted by her father Adolphus Moses. Anna Adolphus Mosis signs the deed in Hebrew: Hadas, daughter of the honorable Rabbi Leib.

The letter provided further information about our forefather Adolphus Moses:

16 May 1691: Adolphus Moses and Samuel Cohn, merchants in Amsterdam, sell Frederick van Halmael mintmaster in the province of Groningen a large party of silver.

10 January 1703. The leaders of the Jewish Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam, among them Adolphus Moses,

*The religious ceremony most probably took place in August, 1706; the required notification was made in October of the same year and the civil marriage performed in January, 1707.

let out on lease two cellars belonging to the community.

9 October 1715. Adolphus Moses bankrupt.

5 November 1717. Adolphus Moses sells a house and yard in the Muiderstraat to Moses Samuel Cohn. According to the deed, the sale took place through a procuration since Adolphus Moses was living then in Hamburg. According to the procuration, Adolphus Moses had a brother, Magnus Moses. It could not be determined where and when Adolphus Moses died.

My questions as to the background of Rabbi Loeb Birch have been answered. There was no Sephardic connection.

There still remains the question of the connection between the Marx and Moses families. Though Spanish Jews settled in Amsterdam in the early 16th century the burial lists of their community disclose only a few "Tedescos" (Jews from Germany) in the early years of the 17th century.

The first Ashkenazi congregation in Amsterdam was formed in 1635. The second rabbi of that congregation was Isaac ben Joshua from Emmerich, the birthplace of Assur Marx. Since the first Ashkenazi settlers in Amsterdam came from the Rhineland, it is reasonable that the Marx and Moses families knew one another from Emmerich. It may also be significant that Assur Marx reported to the royal magistrate in Halle in 1722 that one of his sons was living in Hamburg where Adolphus Moses had gone after his bankruptcy in Amsterdam.

While the foregoing digression is of interest, let us return once again to the main threads of our history, to Marx Assur and life in Halle.

Marx Assur became a partner of his father. Apparently he was able to retain the appointments held by his father to the various courts he had served; he also continued to represent the Lehmann and Gomperz interests in their farflung banking and commercial enterprises. In addition, he obtained appointments as Hoffaktor to the King of Sweden, and, on July 20, 1747, to Duke William VIII of Hessen-Kassel,²⁹ (who succeeded to the dukedom when his brother became Frederick I of Sweden). It is not possible to ascertain which of these appointments came first.

The family of the Hessen-Kassel dynasty was not above avarice. One of the successors of William VIII "rented" his army of Hessians to Britain to fight in the American revolutionary war. That same ruler employed Meyer Amschel Rothschild as one of his fiscal agents, thus laying the foundation for the Rothschild banking em-

pire; this took place some fifty years after the appointment of Marx Assur as Hoffaktor to Duke William VIII.

Marx Assur was an enterprising and busy man. He also owned or at least had an interest in a retail outlet in Halle. This information is derived from microfilmed documents I received in December, 1982, relating to the Jewish Community in Halle, preserved at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem.

Among these documents is a file dated November 25, 1791, titled "Complaint of the Merchants' Guild (Kramerinnung) against the Jewish Community (Judenenschaft)." The complaint maintained that members of the Guild alone had the right to operate retail stores, that Jews were permitted to deal only in second-hand goods (Trodel) and that Jews had violated that restriction.

The Jews of Halle objected vigorously to the complaint, citing in turn the privileges granted them since the early 1700's; they offered to bring in two hundred witnesses who would testify that Jewish-owned retail stores had existed in Halle for decades.

Among four examples cited was a retail store owned by Marx Magnus in partnership with Marx Assur, selling silver goods and textiles. The store was located in the "Little Berlin" district, the neighborhood of Marx Assur's residence, which will be described later in some detail. Two witnesses testified to the existence of this store in the mid-1700's. One of these was a silversmith who had made goods for the store; the other was a widow who had come to Halle from Hamburg to testify and who remembered accompanying her father as a young girl to shop in the store. Both witnesses stated they had dealt with Marx Magnus; neither one remembered Marx Assur. This is entirely credible since the multiple activities of Marx Assur would make it highly unlikely he would be an active partner in the enterprise.

The lawsuit was finally decided in 1799, after years of litigation, when the court dismissed the complaint of the Guild.

The life of Marx Assur was not without its dramatic moments. During the night of August 12, 1737, Elias Ruben Gomperz (who, in 1720 figured in the assessment complaint against the elders of Halle), was found murdered in the house of Marx Assur. The local historian, von Dreyhaupt, writes in the archives of the county that the murder occurred "in the attic of the house belonging to the Jew Assur, a corner house in the Little Berlin (district) in the Maerkstrasse at the Taubengasse."

Elias Gomperz had been unable to make a place for himself in Magdeburg, and in 1729 had received a Schutzbrevi permitting him to move to Halle.³⁰ Since Marx Assur represented the Gomperz interests in Halle, it is quite understandable that Elias would live in his

house.

There are few details regarding the murder. Historians Kisch and Schnee report the event but make no comment on it. There is no mention of a murderer or a suspect, no conjecture as to motive, and not a word about whether a murderer was found or prosecuted. Our written family history which was destroyed in a fire in Schmalkalden in the 1890's may have offered an explanation.

The statement by von Dreyhaupt referring to "...the house belonging to the Jew Assur" is interesting. Jews had been prohibited from owning real estate in Prussia. The exception in Halle was the cemetery and a house of worship. In 1721 only Solomon Israel owned a house in Halle. The ban on owning real estate was in force until the early 1800's.³¹

However, Court Jews were known to own property and apparently the Marx family had acquired real estate in Halle. The house owned by Marx Assur was just a few blocks removed from the birthplace of the composer Georg Friedrich Handel, whose father was a doctor. Handel was born in 1685; Marx Assur was born in the following year, so they were contemporaries. When I visited Halle in 1976 I found Handel's house still standing and in good repair; I was unable at the time to identify the house of Marx Assur.

Marx Assur followed closely in his father's footsteps as a community leader. In 1737, following his father's death, he was elected president of the community. As we have seen, Marx Assur was a devoted sponsor of Jewish scholars, helping to finance publication of Talmudic studies. As to his own scholarship, historian von Dreyhaupt writes in the chronicles of the county published in 1755, in the fourth chapter titled "Of the Jews in Halle in Old and Modern Times":

At all times there have been among the Hallenser Jews scholars of the Talmud and rabbinical writings like the president and royal Polish and royal Swedish Hoffaktor Marx Assur, who also possesses valuable books and papers of rabbinical writings.

On still another level Marx Assur achieved a measure of success. In 1740, one of the many petitions he addressed to the royal chamber in the name of the Hallenser Jews cited the considerable success they had had in greatly increasing the trade of the city. They described their visits to the trade fairs in Leipzig, Brunswick and Naumburg, their trade connections in the province of Magdeburg and the neighboring states of Saxony, Brunswick and Franconia, and their contacts with numerous princely courts and cities.³²

1744 saw the death of Gella, wife of Marx Assur for thirty-eight

years. She was fifty-three. In the 1722 census report Marx Assur stated they had five children, two sons and three daughters; documents filed in 1793 in connection with the estate of Marx Assur indicate at least one more son was born after 1722.

Gella died at a time when her family's fortunes were at their highest. Her husband was the respected leader of the Jewish community. His banking and trading business was flourishing. One of their sons had become a doctor with the special permission of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia. The oldest son, following the tradition of his father and grandfather, was a Hebrew scholar; he was our forefather, Aaron Marx.

This euphoric state was not destined to endure. With the coming of the Seven Years War, the fortunes of the Marx family changed. The war, which lasted from 1756 to 1763, changed not only the lives of our ancestors, but that of the entire Western world. As a result of that war Canada on the American continent was ceded by France to England. The war also set the stage for the partition of Poland between Prussia, Austria and Russia, a dismemberment which would last until 1918. Finally, Prussia emerged from the war as the leading power in Central Europe.

In 1759, Halle, a Prussian city, was occupied by the imperial troops of Austria. The commanding general of the occupying force levied a heavy fine on the city, confiscated the products of the salt works and created havoc in the surrounding countryside by appropriating the horses of the larger farms. When the military situation was reversed, the occupying forces withdrew from Halle on August 24, 1759.

The historian Gustav Friedrich Hertzberg, a non-Jew, describes in his history of Halle the events of that day as they involved Marx Assur:

... because 42,900 Thaler of the levy (the fine or ransom demanded by the Austrian invaders) were still outstanding, councilman Lange, Commercial Counselor Joachim, the longtime president of the Jewish community Marx Assur and the chief inspector of the salt works Cuormer von Clausbach, were taken as hostage and first sent to Merseburg. Most of them did not see their home again. The merchants Marx Assur and Joachim, Inspector Cuormer and the Privy Counselor Floecke (?) died in 1761 and 1762 in Nuremberg, where they had been taken...

Marx Assur was 73 years of age when he was taken as a hostage by the Austrians. A historian of the period who had compiled lists of Jewish families in various parts of Prussia and whose handwritten

notes are in the archives of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City, states that Marx Assur was liberated by Prussian troops in 1762.

Our family tree shows that he died in Fuerth, a town near Nuremberg. Since Jews at that time were not permitted to live in Nuremberg, it is likely he found refuge with the Jewish community of Fuerth after his liberation. At any rate, our records show that he died on the 5th of Cheshwan, 5523, that is, in October of 1762.

The abduction and death of Marx Assur evidently had a profound effect on the wealth of the family. Halle itself suffered extensively from the ravages of the Seven Years War.

By the end of the 18th century most of the descendants of Marx Assur, three of his children among them, had left Halle for Berlin.³³

One final anti-climactic bit of trivia: In an anti-Semitic vein, the historian Schnee notes critically that Marx Assur's pass to the Leipzig fair issued in 1751 was still being used by a member of the family in 1763, in spite of the fact that Marx Assur had been abducted and had died in 1762.

AARON MARX (1708-1777)

Aaron, the first son of Marx Assur, was born in Halle on the 6th of Shevat, 5468, which would be in January of 1708. As a young man, he married Kreinle Misselfeld who was destined to die while still youthful on the 21st of Av, 5505 (in July 1745).

They managed to have five sons. According to the family tree, four of them either died unmarried or were childless. Aaron very probably moved to Schleusingen as a young man since all of his children were born in that small town in Thuringia. It was here that his grandfather, Assur Marx, exerted strong influence on its ruler, and where in 1704 and 1705 Assur Marx had obtained court appointments and residency permits for members of the extended family.

It is not known why Aaron as a young man chose to leave Halle. It may well be he was assigned to look after the family's business interests in that region. Or he may have elected to devote himself to the study of the Torah in a more peaceable setting, away from the hustle and bustle of the busy town of Halle. Our family tree describes him as a respected Jewish scholar and refers to him reverently as "rabbi".

There is no other evidence to support the claim of scholarliness for Aaron, but since our family tree has been proved accurate in its details and its general historical facts, it is reasonable to accept this description of Aaron.

Following the death of Kreinle, Aaron married one Elkele, daughter of the well-known and respected Rabbi Aron of Halberstadt, the town near Halle which was a center of Jewish learning at that time. The marriage proved to be childless, and Elkele preceded her husband in death on the 1st of Shevat, 5525 (January, 1765). Aaron died at the age of sixty-nine in Schleusingen on the 10th of Av, 5537 (July 1777).

GOETZ MARX (1735-1780)

Goetz, the second son of Aaron Marx and Kreinle, was born in Schleusingen on 6 Tishre, 5496 (September, 1735). He lived his fairly brief life of forty-five years entirely in Schleusingen, where he died in 1780. He married Schendel, who also died at a young age in Schleusingen on the 1st of Tamus, 5537 (June, 1776).

Goetz and Schendel had one son and two daughters. The son was the first to adopt the name "Cohn". One of the daughters, Krendel, married her uncle, the oldest brother of her father, who is identified in our family tree as Rabbi Loeb Aaron Marx. Rabbi Loeb had been married previously to a Mandel from Schmalkalden, the first of three Mandel women who would marry into the Marx-Cohn family. Both of Rabbi Loeb's marriages proved to be childless, and he assumed the responsibility of raising the children of his brother Goetz when they were orphaned.

Goetz is the last ancestor whom our family tree honors with the title "rabbi". His wife, Schendel, is identified as the daughter of Rabbi Moses of Bamberg in Bavaria. As in other instances, it is difficult to ascertain whether the title "rabbi" is meant to identify the spiritual leader of a community or to honor a man of learning. My research leads me to believe that the man identified as Rabbi Moses of Bamberg was not a religious leader of that old Jewish community but rather one of its elders and/or scholars.

REFLECTIONS ON COURT JEWS, PROTECTED JEWS, AND JEWISH EMANCIPATION

The foregoing narrative has told the story of our family from the middle of the 16th century to the opening of the nineteenth century — a century which saw the emancipation of the Jew and his entry into the intellectual and cultural life of Europe.

It is perhaps appropriate at this point to consider the impact of the Court Jews on Jewish life in Germany, and the effect of the protection offered by German princes on the descendants of those "protected Jews" who were not themselves Court Jews.

In our time, Jewish historians and teachers of Jewish history pay scant attention to the phenomenon of the Court Jew. Not all Jews, then as well as now, viewed these privileged few with favor. While the Court Jews opened cities, regions and opportunities for their fellow Jews, fought vigorously for their civil rights, furthered and maintained Jewish learning and tradition, they were, after all, an elite endowed with all the selfish attributes of any aristocracy.

While Court Jews acquired wealth and influence, the majority of their Jewish contemporaries continued to live in the ghettos in poverty. The Court Jews were essentially a closed society. Their families protected and preserved their wealth and power by intermarrying within that society. They jealously guarded their privileges and wealth and saw to it that these were handed over to their children. Many of them were descendants of rabbinical families (as were our ancestors) who did not hesitate to use their power to obtain rabbinical appointments for family members from the Jewish community.

When the walls of the ghettos began to come down in the early 19th century, the descendants of the Court Jews found themselves playing dominant roles in the cultural life of the great cities of Vienna and Berlin. This new world now open to them with its vistas of access to art and culture and new career opportunities, also presented powerful and seductive temptations. Some of these descendants of the Court Jews succumbed and deserted the faith of their fathers.

The dominant position held by the Court Jews in the 18th century, followed by the conversion to Christianity of many of their descendants in the early 19th century was looked on with great disfavor by the majority of Jews.

There are, however, notable exceptions among the descendants of Court Jews who did not succumb to conversion. Foremost among these were the Rothschilds. Similarly, our own ancestors not only remained Jews, but continued to be devoted to the religious

teachings of their people. They also preserved their tradition as leaders of their communities. Similarly, the descendants of Behrend Lehmann, the sponsor and business partner of Assur Marx, remained within the Jewish fold; in point of fact, one of his descendants, Emil Lehmann, became a leading advocate of Reform Judaism.

Not all of Assur Marx' descendants, however, maintained their Jewish allegiance. Adolf Bernhard Marx, one of his great-grandsons and a noted musicologist, converted to Christianity at an early age at the beginning of the 19th century. Whether any of the descendants of the children of Assur Marx who took up residence in Berlin at the end of the 18th century remained Jewish, is not known.

Their status as "Schutzjuden" in the 18th century and the emancipation experienced by the Jews of Germany during the 19th century had a profound effect on their attitude toward the "State" and produced a sense of "belonging". It is interesting to examine how this attitude came about in the largest German state, Prussia.

The Court Jews were a small "uppercrust" of the Jews who had settled in the Prussian lands ever since the middle of the 17th century. In the course of some 150 years — roughly from 1650 to 1800 — it is believed that the total number of Court Jews was about 250. The majority of other Jews who came into Prussia during that period lived there, as we have seen, under the "Schutzbrief", the letter of protection. Much of the native population, as we have also noted, was hostile, and continued to be so even after emancipation was granted to the Jews of Prussia. For example, many occupations and practically all professions were denied to them until the 1850's.

The rulers of Prussia differed greatly in their attitudes toward Jews. Some were genuinely tolerant; most, however, were anti-Semitic for religious, philosophical, or other reasons.

In the 1750's, Frederick the Great (who certainly did not deserve this epithet for his attitude toward Jews), issued an edict which significantly diminished the gains made by the Jews under his predecessors. By and large, however, the Prussian Kings honored the Schutzbrief as granted, assuring security of life and property.

In sharp contrast to the practice of dynasties in other lands, the Prussian rulers discouraged anti-Jewish riots and did not tolerate pogroms. From the time Assur Marx settled in Halle in the 1680's, there were no physical attacks on Jews in that city. There is only one recorded exception which occurred in 1724 when a Jew and a Christian student got into a fight, with the Jew badly beating the student. The fraternity to which the student belonged, reinforced by other students and a mob, attacked the Synagogue and vandalized it along with several Jewish homes, which were plundered. The authorities

were slow to react, but as the contemporary historian explains, they were ill-equipped to cope with drunken students who could flee to the sanctuary of the university.¹⁴

The descendants of the Jews who had settled in the Prussian lands during the 17th and 18th centuries felt more secure there than the Jews in most European countries. When emancipation in the 19th century brought the Jews of Prussia new economic opportunities and participation in the cultural and political life of the land, they developed a strong feeling of "belonging", this in spite of continuing discrimination. For example, until 1918, careers in the civil service and the military were closed to Jews. There was also social discrimination. But to the Jew in Prussia as well as in most of the other German lands, the attainment of *full* equality appeared to be merely a matter of time. A "symbiosis" between the beloved traditions and teachings of the Jewish people and the cultural tradition of the German people seemed a viable possibility.*

Few German Jews, enjoying the fruits of emancipation and a growing sense of active participation in the national life of Germany, ever dreamed of the possibility of a terminal disaster for their existence. And even fewer wanted to see that the Christian advocates of emancipation, beginning with Napoleon, the greatest of them, demanded the liquidation of Judaism as the price for the emancipation of the Jew. When the illusion of emancipation was shattered in the events of the 1930's and culminated in the unspeakable horror of the Holocaust, shock and disbelief hit the Jewry of Central Europe and indeed Jews everywhere. It forever altered their attitudes and beliefs.

*Compare this with contemporary American references to our "common Judeo-Christian heritage".

THE QUEST FOR OUR ROOTS

Ever since my return from service with the U.S. Army in 1946, I have wanted to record the history of my mother's family. My great regret is that I did not undertake the actual project until many years after the death of my mother in 1967. She was well-informed about her ancestry and was a source of constant encouragement when I began the research for this work during the last years of her life.

The basic facts concerning the Marx-Cohn family — the record of births, marriages, deaths, and places of residence, are contained in the family tree prepared in 1916 by my maternal grandfather, Wilhelm Markus Cohn. This is the sole document which was preserved when the family fled Germany in the 1930's. A second source of information was a high-school paper I had written in 1930 which described salient events in the history of the family. Publication of this paper was arranged by my grandmother, Sofie Hecht Cohn. It is now in the National German Library in Leipzig.

My purpose in writing this history was not only to leave a record of their roots for my own descendants, but also to confirm the data contained in the family tree as well as the stories related by my grandfather and my mother. My search for substantiating sources was successful beyond my expectations.

My first opportunity to devote time to this work came in 1966, when a heart attack compelled me to spend time recuperating at home. There may have been other reasons for delaying this work for more than twenty years. I had not only the demands on my time entailed in building a professional career and rearing a large family, but I also had to resolve the conflicts and overcome the bitterness in me arising from the events in Europe during the Nazi reign of barbaric terror.

I was aware there were historical documents in existence relating to the coming of our ancestors to Halle. I also remembered having read about Marx Assur in the County history which had been written in the 1750's. However, there was much more to learn.

I began my quest by writing to professors of history and to librarians whom I knew, asking for clues and documentation.

I discovered that one of the few remaining editions of the above mentioned history of the County in which Halle was located, was in the rare book collection of the University of Chicago. The University also possesses in its archives articles by Professor Guido Kisch relating to the social, legal, and economic history of the Jewish community in Halle during the 18th century. Kisch had been a professor at the University of Halle from 1923 to 1933. The articles I discovered at the University of Chicago alerted me to the work of

Kisch, so that when in 1970 he published a book based on these articles written decades earlier, I wrote to him. He graciously sent me a copy of his book with an inscription I greatly treasure.

Since that time I have had occasional contact with Professor Kisch. At the time of this writing, he is living in Basel, Switzerland, at 94 years of age. His book, and particularly the documentary section, became the primary source for my work. References contained in that book led me to further sources, in particular to the writings of Heinrich Schnee (a non-Jew), Max Freudenthal and Selma Stern-Taubler.

While in Halle, Kisch was unaware that my mother was a descendant of the founding Jewish family about which he wrote. Had he been able to consult my mother, several minor errors in his work could have been avoided by referring to our family tree.

In 1966, I was also able to communicate with Willy Unger, an official of the East German government, who is a brother of Hunt Unger, a fellow Hallenser now living in Evanston, Illinois. Willy Unger selflessly and laboriously copied by hand excerpts from the original documents in the state archives referring to Assur Marx and Marx Assur. He also copied excerpts from the Hertzberg book; one of these excerpts describes the abduction of Marx Assur as a hostage in 1759.

Members of the library staff at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City were helpful by directing me to sources of information about ancestors who did not live in Halle. It was they who referred me to the YIVO Institute in New York for the Memorbook of Deutz, which contains the reference to Rabbi Moshe, our first known ancestor. They were helpful also in referring me to sources in Amsterdam for information which solved questions I had about an ancestor who once lived in that city.

Some pieces of information I acquired by accident or by serendipity, such as the reference in the anti-Semitic book by Deetz to Marx Assur as a disseminator of Jewish knowledge. I came across that passage while researching the history of the Rothschilds in an attempt to find a reference to the brother of our ancestress, Henrietta Mandel, my great-grandmother.*

A pleasant byproduct of my research was the development of friendships with historians and librarians, which led to a number of interesting encounters. One of these was my meeting with Monika Richarz, a young German historian. She had worked as a researcher in the early 1970's at the Leo Baeck Institute. One of the results of her work was a book in German published in 1974, entitled: "The

*Her brother had been a representative of the Rothschilds in Italy in the 1840's.

Entry of Jews Into the Professions".

Although the book contains little new material about our ancestors in Halle, it was helpful to me as background information, since Richarz wrote about the involvement of Assur Marx and Marx Assur with the University of Halle in the early 18th century. During a meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago, I had the pleasure of meeting Miss Richarz. She was thrilled to meet a descendant of the people about whom she had written. She offered to help with the writing of the Marx-Cohn family history, albeit in German, but by the time I had compiled the material, she had returned to the University of Berlin.

When in 1980 I retired from active business, I finally had an opportunity to sort and evaluate the historical data I had accumulated. It was then I began to write this history. I spent many hours at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, and in the libraries of the Spertus College of Judaica in Chicago and the University of Chicago. Many fruitless hours were also spent in an attempt to obtain information about Rabbi Moshe and other ancestors whose lives were not as well documented as those of Assur Marx and Marx Assur.

Texts of documents relating to Assur Marx are appended as are notes and comments on the text of the history.

Also appended is a biography of Adolf Bernhard Marx (1795-1866) who, although not one of our ancestors, was a great-grandson of Assur Marx. It is the story of one of the most influential music theorists of the 19th century.

Finally, there is a bibliography with explanatory notes followed by genealogical tables.

Most of the source material for this book is in German. All translations from the German which appear in the text are mine.

Many members of my immediate family were helpful in the preparation of this family history. I owe special thanks to our daughter Sharon who reviewed the first draft of the manuscript.

George Brodsky, a good friend and long-time neighbor, edited this work. I am grateful to this talented man for his contribution.

TRANSCRIPTS OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ASSUR MARX

Text of Letter of Protection (Schutzbrev)

for Assur Marx and Consorts

(Translated from the German text cited by Kisch on Page 133 as Document 8. Original document signed by P. von Fuchs. Original and a certified copy are in Prussian Secret State Archives, Berlin in file REP 52 N 159 K 16. The document is dated at Colln at that time a town near Berlin)

Colln, 12 October 1694

We, Frederick the Third, by the grace of G'd Margrave of Brandenburg, elector, etc., hereby announces and let it be known, as the at present in Halle as Consort of the above privileged Jew Solomon Israel residing Jew Assur Marx has humbly petitioned for his own letter of protection for himself and his consorts, that we in consideration of his hitherto good conduct as well as other motivating reasons, graciously grant his humble petition. This is done herewith and on the strength of this patent said Assur Marx and his consorts can further reside in Halle and there so enjoy all and every freedom and privilege in trade and commerce like other Jews in our lands, in particular in our residence Berlin and Colln on the Spree, under our protection; he can also butcher and lend money, without hindrance, and we place him and his own under our special protection and shelter. In return the impetrant will give us, as princely sovereign, as protection fee annually eight Thaler, and, except for the head tax, from which he is exempt because he has taken residence in our lands, he shall remit all other tariffs and civil obligations like all our subjects. Beyond that he is not to be troubled. Our government in Magdeburg as well as the mayor and city council as well as the citizens of Halle are herewith graciously ordered to obediently respect this and to let said Jews there reside and trade and not be disturbed by anyone, and to grant them protection and justice upon properly submitted request.

Enclosures:

Eight Rtlr (Reichstaler) of one year protection fee from trinitatis 1693 to 1694 has been remitted by the Jew Assur Marx to the Elector's treasury. This is herewith acknowledged. Signed Halle, the 2nd of June, 1694. *Joh. Bodo Bethmann*

Eight Rtlr of one year protection fee from trinitatis 1694 until 1695 has been remitted by the Jew Assur Marx to the Electoral Brandenburg Treasury. This is herewith acknowledged. Signed Halle, the 30th of May, 1695. *Joh. Bodo Bethmann*

Sixteen Rtlr of one year protection fee for his two consorts in accordance with the gracious order of 12 October 1694 was paid by the

Jew Assur Marx to the Electoral Treasury here. Though they are not all here yet, his Electoral Grace should not lose his protective fee, which is herewith acknowledged. Signed Halle, the 28th or October, 1695. *Joh. Bodo Bethmann*

In the same file of the Prussian Secret State Archives, Berlin, are six affidavits for Assur Marx by members of the city council and members of the academic community. These affidavits were submitted by him in connection with his request for the admission to Halle of two Jews to be his "consorts", i.e. trade associates.

All affidavits attest to his honesty, reliability and fair trade practices. The affidavits were issued by the following:

28 March 1696. Friedrich Ernst Knorre and Friedrich Beker city council president and city councilman.

31 March 1696. Johannes Franciscus Buddeus, Professor of Theologie and Philosophie.

This affidavit emphasizes that Assur Marx was willing to serve anyone without prejudice, "(He) has and is continuing to render services to strangers and residents, which no one else would do or could do. He is particularly helpful to the youthful students by cashing their notes, so that our university also has much to be thankful for."

Christophorus Cellarius, Historian

This affidavit observes that Assur Marx "is so knowledgeable in Hebrew and rabbinical literature that he can easily debate lovers of these studies..."

Friderich Hoffman, Professor. Notarized before Johann Georg Simon.

Jos. Samuel Stryke, Professor

This affidavit also emphasizes the banking service rendered to students "at a low profit".

Ludwig Gebhardt Kraut, Prorektor, Professor and Secretary of the University.

The affidavit states that since the founding of the University (in 1694) Assur Marx "more than any other Jew residing here" was helpful in money matters "for us and all students". The official seal of the University and the seal of his office (University Secretary) are imprinted.

Patent Issued by Augustus of Saxony and Poland for Assur Marx.
Kisch on Page 28 refers to a certified copy of this document dated

at Warsaw (Poland) on 29 January 1701. This is file REP 52 N 159 K 1B in the Prussian Secret State Archives.

Kisch quotes from the document that "Assur Marx, Jew from Halle and all his family" ('Seiningen' in German which could also mean all his people, i.e. business associates, servants, etc.) in recognition of many years of service are taken under the protection of the elector of Saxony and king of Poland with the right of residence and the right to trade in his realm, "particularly in Our city Leipzig all and every permitted and honest dealings at the usual public fair"..."It is him herewith also permitted, as often as he may want to, with servants and materials, also with horse and wagon, to go there. To enter and to depart, to stay there according to his convenience and liking, without hindrances of any kind and without payment of duty for himself and his servant, which is known as Leibzoll (Head Tax)."

Assur Marx' Appointment as Supplier to the Mint of Saxony.

Kisch on Page 29 cites the patents of appointment as having been issued at Dresden (capital of Saxony) on June 20 and 22, 1702. Copies are in the Prussian Secret State Archives file Rep 52 N 159 K 16.

The Absence of Assur Marx from Halle.

Kisch lists as document 17 (Page 143) a list of all resident Jews in the province of Magdeburg. The document regarding Halle is dated December 15, 1700; it is in the state archives in Magdeburg, as file Rep A 5 Na 726, 86 9F. As to Assur Marx it states the following: Assur Marx, who resides here in his eighth year, but seldom stays here, he is bookkeeper or secretary for the royal Polish Court Jew Bernd Lehmannen.

**NOTES AND COMMENTS
RELATING TO THE TEXT**

*Marx-Cohn Family
From the Mid-16th Century
to the close of the 18th Century*

Citations from the following authors are identified as follows:

Guido Kisch:
Rechts und Sozialgeschichte der Juden
in Halle 1686-1730.

Kisch:

Max Freudenthal:
Leipziger Messgaeste (Die juedischen
Besucher der Leipziger Messe in den
Jahren 1675-1764).
Aus der Heimat Mendelsohns

Freudenthal, Leipzig:

Freudenthal, Heimat:

Selma Stern-Taubler:
Der preussische Staat und die Juden
The Court Jews

Stern, Staat:
Stern, Court Jews:

Heinrich Schnee:
Die Hoffinanz und der moderne Staat

Schnee:

Other citations and sources are identified in detail.

NOTES AND COMMENTS RELATING TO THE TEXT

- (1) Jews with the Hebrew name of Moshe or Mordecai selected Markus or Mark as their non-Hebrew name. This became the family name of Marks or Marx. The name Cohn derives from the Hebrew Kohen indicating a Jew of priestly descent. According to Jewish folklore Kohanim are descendants of Aaron, brother of Moses and the first High Priest.
- (2) Mordecai died in 1681, 54 years (or perhaps even 57 years) after the death of Moshe. Obviously, Mordecai was a child of Moshe's later years. We have no knowledge of Rabbi Moshe's wife or wives, nor about other children, if any. The memorbook of Deutz mentions a woman named Shprintz, daughter of Reb Moshe. She may have been a daughter of our ancestor Moshe and a sister of Mordecai. The text is as follows: "May G'd remember the soul of the woman Shprintz, the daughter of Reb Moshe, who strengthened her soul through fasting and repentance and study of Tora and who gave charity to the poor and bestowed upon them food, drink and a place to sleep and who was always modest in her home because her son consecrated gifts in her honor. Died in the city of Leischt (?) 18th of Tevet 5377 (December, 1617).
(Translated from the Hebrew into English by Meira Mainzer.)
- (3) The rulers of the various German lands had titles which were indicative of their ranking among the dynasties of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation", an empire which no longer had any political reality in the 17th and 18th centuries. Since these titles are meaningless to a contemporary reader they are not being used in this text. Titles being used are those the reader can relate to, such as king or duke. In all other cases the word "ruler" is being used. The rulers of Prussia were "electors" and "margraves" of Brandenburg until they acquired the title "king" in 1701. The ruler of Saxony also was an "elector" until Saxony became a kingdom.
- (4) Richarz: The Entry of Jews into the Professions, Page 35.
- (5) Kisch: Page 58.
- (6) The names Behrend Lehmann and King Augustus the Strong are frequently mentioned in the story of Assur Marx. Behrend Lehmann was born in Essen in 1661. His Jewish name was Issachar Berman. As a young man he moved to Halberstadt in Central Germany, a leading Jewish community at that time. He became associated with a prominent family of Court Jews, named Behrens. Through them he came into contact with various German princes. He became a favorite of Augustus, ruler of Saxony. In time, Lehmann not only became his banker, contractor and supplier of army goods and luxury items to the Saxon court and the ruler's numerous ladies, but served also as a political and diplomatic confidant. He played a major part in gaining the Polish crown for Augustus.
Augustus the Strong, whose official name was Friedrich August, is described by the historian Selma Stern-Taubler in her book "Court Jews" as follows: "Frederick Augustus, ...believed more than any other of the contemporary

princes in the divine right of kings. Convinced that the purpose of the State and its subjects was to serve the desire of the ruler, and that a wise prince never allows himself to be influenced by moralistic considerations, he sacrificed his land and people to his extravagant wishes. He was well educated and talented, a good mathematician and artist, and he had on his many travels acquired a broad outlook and an unprejudiced mind, so that he could be tolerant of every religion and creed and refused to persecute those whose beliefs differed from his own...He became famous as the lover* of many unusual women whom he brought from Sweden, France, Poland, Austria, and even Turkey, and who all fell under his spell. He was reputed to be the father of countless children, to all of whom he generously gave castles and dominions, money and jewelry...As the ruler of the most intolerant Protestant country in Europe, as the descendant of princes who had dared to fight against the Emperor...in defense of their new faith,...he did not hesitate to betray his homeland and his ancestors and to become Catholic in order to gain the Polish throne. For the sake of his royal throne, he entered into an alliance with Behrend Lehmann...Though economics may have played a part in his decision, Augustus' decisive motif was a personal one, for he himself confessed that his greatest ambition was to be famous..."

The Polish king was elected by the high nobility. When John Sobieski, King of Poland, died in 1696, all of Europe was aroused as the power constellation of Europe would be influenced by the allegiances of the king to be elected and representative of European royal houses hurried to Poland. Behrend Lehmann accompanied one of Augustus' cabinet ministers to Poland, carrying with him 30,000 Thaler in cash and large amounts of banknotes. On the night before the election (June 15, 1697) he unloaded a large shipment of wine. The wine and the distribution of 40,000 Thaler to the electors did the trick, and Augustus was elected King of Poland. Lehmann's task did not end with the election. Promises of a substantial pension had been made to the widow of the former king, the candidate of an opposing party received a large compensation, and with bribes and gifts a revolt by army officers was prevented. The coronation in Warsaw was a spectacle costing millions. It is estimated that the cost to the subjects of Augustus to satisfy the ambition of their ruler was 88 million Thaler. Of that amount Behrend Lehmann raised 10 million, a sum unheard of in those times.

Throughout the 1690s our forefather Assur Marx had been associated with Behrend Lehmann. We do not know if he played a part, if any, in these events.

Historians give Behrend Lehmann high marks as a compassionate and dedicated Jew. Whereas some of the more powerful Court Jews were considered outsiders by contemporary Jews, Behrend Lehmann was revered as a second Joseph in Egypt. To quote Selma Stern in Court Jews: "...the founder of the "Claus" (Yeshivah) in Halberstadt, the publisher of the Talmud, the man who defeated the first Prussian king at chess and who even in the glittering world of the Court never forgot the Eternal Truth, corresponded to the ideal which Jews at all times have had of their great men and leaders." On Lehmann's insistence Jews received residency permissions in intolerant Saxony.

If Lehmann had faults, it was his ostentatiousness. In Halberstadt, his home, he traveled about in a carriage drawn by six white horses and attended by three lackeys. He maintained a palatial home with a retinue of thirty people, including a rabbi and a shohet.

Augustus' conversion to Catholicism and his extravagance was resented by his people. That resentment also reflected on the Jews Augustus had admitted to Saxony and would contribute to the decline of the Lehmann enterprises. In the

*The epithaph "THE STRONG" was a tribute to Augustus' sexual prowess.

1720s Behrend Lehmann had lent large amounts to the Behrens family (one of his daughters was married to a Behrens). The Behrens were in financial difficulties because of trumped-up charges brought against them. When Behrens went bankrupt, the court refused to acknowledge the claim of Lehmann. Behrend Lehmann died in 1730 and in 1731 a hostile group of Saxon officials revoked all the privileges of his son. The large uncollectible sums loaned to the Behrens and the loss of the Saxon base forced the Lehmann enterprises into bankruptcy and landed Lehmann's oldest son in debtor's prison for a number of years.

The Lehmann bankruptcy apparently did not effect our ancestors, though they were agents for them in Halle. Marx family members were related by marriage to the Lehmann family. For example, the anti-Semitic author Deetz, who is quoted in sections of this book, states that Marx Assur was a brother-in-law of Reuben Meyer in Warsaw. Reuben Meyer was a Court Jew and a brother of Behrend Lehmann's brother-in-law.

(7) Freudenthal. Leipzig: Visits in 1692/97 and 1711.

(8) Kisch. Page 24.

(9) Kisch. Footnote 18 on Page 22.

(10) Stern. Court Jews: Page 143.

(11) Kisch. Page 26.

(12) Kisch. Page 27.

(13) Schnee. Vol. 2 Page 211 and Freudenthal, Heimat: Page 25.

(14) Kisch. Page 34.

(15) Kisch. Page 60/61.

(16) The author was Johann Jakob Schudt (1664-1722), an academician in Frankfurt (Main), who concerned himself with Judaism, Hebrew and Jewish history. He published in 1714 "Juedische Merkwuerdigkeiten" (Jewish Peculiarities) which was republished in Berlin in 1922. Schudt's writings are anti-Semitic, but they are a valuable source of Jewish customs in his time. The quotation regarding Assur Marx is on page 72 of the 1922 reprint in the 13th chapter of book six. (For more background on Schudt see the section on bibliography)

(17) Freudenthal: Heimat: Footnote 3 on page 25.

(18) The Wettin family was an old dynastic family tracing its origin to the beginning of German history around 900 B.C. During the time of Assur Marx one branch of the Wettin family ruled Saxony, another branch the territory of Thuringia. Thuringia was constantly subdivided between the various members of the family, resulting in the creation of numerous small dukedoms. In the 19th and 20th century members of that dynastic family became rulers of various European countries, one became king of Belgium in 1831 as Leopold I, Albert married Queen Victoria in 1840 and became the ancestor of modern day British kings, Ferdinand married Maria II of Portugal in 1836 and created that royal house until the end of its reign in 1910, as Ferdinand I another member of that family became King of Bulgaria in 1887 and his descendants ruled there until 1946. The name Wettin comes from a castle on the river Saale near Halle, where the family originated. Wettin today is a suburb of Halle.

(19) Schnee. Vol. 2, Page 213. The source for Assur Marx' dealings with the various dukedoms is Schnee.

(20) That shelter was given by privileged Jews to their less fortunate brethren is also evidenced by an opinion issued by the law faculty of the University of Halle on May 15, 1714. Solomon Israel, the stepson of the King's Jeweler and under

whose auspices Assur Marx came to Halle, was engaged in a dispute with a magistrate named Berndes in Halle. Both parties attacked each other over a period of years and on one occasion the magistrate used his police powers to have Israel arrested. The opinion of the law faculty and the reason for the arrest follows:

"Despite the prohibition to take in foreign beggar Jews and though he was advised of the prohibition the Jew sheltered them nevertheless. He was, therefore, arrested. In the opinion of the faculty the arrest was justified." (Stern: Staat: Vol. 2. Documents. No. 500. Page 639.)

(21) Wherever Jews settled one of their first concerns was to provide a proper last place of rest for their dead. It is, therefore, not surprising that members of our family, who were communal leaders, were instrumental in providing places of burial for their communities.

The cemetery acquired by Assur Marx served the Jewish community in Halle until 1869. In that year a new cemetery was dedicated which served until 1929. On the 20th of November, 1929 my father, Hugo Mainzer, as president of the community, dedicated that cemetery in an impressive ceremony which I still vaguely remember.

The cemetery had a very handsome hall, which in 1942 would serve as a collection point for the few Jews remaining in Halle before their deportation to the extermination camps.

My grandfather, Wilhelm Markus Cohn, in his capacity as district president, dedicated the last Jewish cemetery in Schmalkalden around 1925. On a visit in 1976 members of our family found that cemetery with the graves of Wilhelm and Sofie Cohn in good condition, well attended by the communist authorities in that small city. Here also urban renewal had made transfer of graves from an older cemetery necessary. There were no Jews living in Schmalkalden when this happened after the end of the Second World War, but the city had transferred the graves and established a Memorial for the victims of the Nazis on that cemetery.

The most impressive cemetery for our family is the one in Bad Kissingen, the origin of the Mainzers. It has been visited in the post-war years by many members of the family. Jewish cemeteries are required to be on a hillside, so that the water can run off, and not settle in the graves. Four generations of Mainzers are buried in Bad Kissingen, the oldest generation at the foot of the hill, the latest, my grandparents, Mayer and Jette Mainzer, at the top of the hill. Following a family tradition, my brother Lewis in 1982 joined the board of the New Light Society, which maintains the cemetery in Lincolnwood, Illinois, where my parents Hugo and Herta Mainzer, as well as Bernard Herst, my wife's father, are buried.

(22) Kisch. Page 105.

(23) David ben Abraham Oppenheim (also Oppenheimer) (1664-1736) was the most revered rabbi of his time. He was born in Worms and already as a boy achieved scholarly fame. He was a nephew of the wealthiest Court Jew of the period, Samuel Oppenheimer in Vienna (1630-1703), from whom he inherited a fortune. At the age of 17 he married a daughter of the Hanoverian Court Jew Leffman Behrens. Behrend Lehmann, the business associate of Assur Marx, was also associated with the Behrens and one of the daughters of Lehmann was married to a son of Behrens. (See Note 6).

David Oppenheim was offered the rabbinate in many cities and regions of Europe, but he declined all to serve as a rabbi of the highly respected community of Nikolsburg, Moravia, where he had been appointed at the age of 25. Twelve years later Oppenheim became rabbi of Prague, a center of Jewish learning. In

time he became Chief Rabbi of Bohemia and Moravia, the present Czechoslovakia. His reputation was such that he was called upon to arbitrate many local quarrels. He developed model constitutions for Jewish communities. However, the German-Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz (1819-1891) is rather critical of Oppenheim's scholarship.

Oppenheim was a great lover of books. He undertook long journeys to obtain rare manuscripts and prints. His library is said to have contained 7,000 volumes. It was eventually acquired (in 1829) by the Bodleian Library of Oxford University.

In his quest for books he was a frequent visitor to the Leipzig Fair which was regularly attended by Assur Marx. It is more than likely that the two men knew each other.

(24) Kisch, who reports this incident, does not give a reason for the confiscation of the prayer books. From other documents of the time it seems likely that the reason was the ALEINU prayer. The ALEINU prayer is one of the oldest of Jewish prayers and since the 12th century is recited at the conclusion of each service. The main theme of the prayer is praise for G'd for having singled out the people of Israel as worshippers of the ONE G'D while others worship idols. The prayer was offensive to many Christian theologians all during history. The 17th and 18th centuries had seen a renewed interest in Judaism by Christian scholars. With the studies of Judaism the controversy about the ALEINU prayer revived. The prayer contained the sentence "...for they (the non-Jews) prostrate themselves before vanity and emptiness and pray to a god that saith not." This sentence was regarded as an insult to Jesus and Christians. In many Jewish services congregants would spit when this sentence was said. (The Hebrew word "r'ik" has the meaning emptiness as well as spittle). The spitting outraged Christian theologians as an additional insult to Jesus.

In 1703 an edict by the Prussian government removed the offending sentence from the prayer. Officials would inspect prayer books and attend services to insure the elimination of the offensive portion. The sentence has since disappeared from the Ashkenazi version of the prayer.

For centuries rabbis discouraged the indecorous and unsanitary custom of spitting. But Jewish customs die hard. A partner of mine, Art Goldrich, remembered the spitting in orthodox services he attended, when he grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota, during the 1930's.

(25) The source for the section "Assur Marx as Communal Leader" is primarily Kisch.

(26) Kisch. Page 75.

(27) Freudenthal. Heimat: Pages 264, 302.

(28) Freudenthal. Heimat: Page 252.

(29) Schnee. Vo. 2. Page 327.

(30) Stern. Staat: Vol. 2. Page 698.

(31) In response to a request by the royal government in Berlin the provincial government in Magdeburg issued a status report on the Jews living in the province on July 12, 1721. The report was very detailed, responding to 70 specific questions. Question No. 42 requested information as to real estate held by Jews. Concerning Halle, the report stated:

"No, in Halle, not, except Solomon Israel, who owns a house for which he had obtained special permission, and Assur Marx, who owns a garden."

(Stern. Staat: Vol. 2, Documents page 672.)

(32) Stern. Staat: Vol. 1, Page 80.

(33) On July 31, 1793 Jacob Marx Assur, Assur Moses and the widow Frommet Gottschalkin, all privileged Jews residing in Berlin, filed a claim as heirs of their father, Marx Assur, in the Michael bankruptcy proceeding. (Our forefather, Aaron, who had lived in Schleusingen, had passed away in 1777.) (Source: Kisch, Page 126. Document No. 124.)

Die Judenbuergerbuecher der Stadt Berlin (the books of Jewish citizens of the city of Berlin), edited by Jacob Jacobson and published by the Berlin Historical Commission in 1962 lists the following, who according to their names and the birthplace of their fathers, appear to be descendants of Assur Marx:

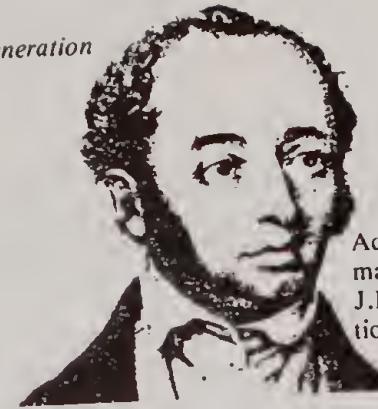
In 1809 on April 8 citizenship was granted to Moses Asher, Spandaustr. 19, born in Berlin on May 6, 1742. He took the name Asher Moses Marx in 1812. He died in Berlin on April 20, 1816. His father was Moses Marcus Asher, born in Halle, a banker, came to Berlin in 1737, died in Berlin on February 8, 1792.

Page 65. Certificate of Citizenship No. 75. (Moses Marcus Asher could be the younger son of Assur Marx shown in the census report in Halle in 1722 as Moses Assur.)

On April 12, 1809 Certificate No. 222 (Page 85) was issued to Haller, Marcus, Rossstr. 4. Born in Halle on August 24, 1764, in Berlin since about 1782, cotton and silk merchant, died in Berlin on June 19, 1820. His father is listed as Abraham Marx Assur, privileged Jew in Halle.

See also the chapter on Adolf Bernhard Marx, a great-grandson of Assur Marx, who left Halle for Berlin around 1820.

(34) Werner Gericke und Friedrich Masch: Halles Minderheiten Page 33.



ADOLF BERNHARD MARX
(1795-1866)

When I was a high school student in 1930, I wrote a paper titled "A Visit with Relatives", in which I described imaginary visits with my ancestors, made possible by means of a miraculous time machine which transported me back into the past.

In this essay, I "visited" with Assur Marx in the early 1700's and reported to him, among other things, that I had heard of a "novel" written about a branch of the family. This fit of fancy was a youthful conceit. It is more likely my grandfather or my mother must have mentioned a book written about our family, a book which in my young enthusiasm became a "novel".

It was only when I discovered the work of Professor Kisch in the 1960's did I realize the "novel" I had fantasized was most probably the memoirs of Adolf Bernhard Marx, published in 1865. On page 31 of his book published in 1970, Kisch states:

*The last known descendant of Assur Marx in Halle was the music critic, pedagogue of music, composer and later professor at the University of Berlin, Adolf Bernhard Marx (1795-1866), friend of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. In his two-volume work 'Erinnerungen' (Remembrance), he describes Jewish life in Halle at the beginning of the 19th century. Already, as a youth he converted against the will of his father.**

Adolf Bernhard Marx was a great-grandson of Assur Marx. His grandfather, who became the Rabbi of the Hallenser community,

*In this footnote, Kisch states that Adolf Bernhard Marx was the son of Isaac Marx (son of Marx Assur) who in 1741 graduated as one of the first Jewish doctors trained at the University of Halle. Since Adolf Bernhard Marx was born in 1795, it is highly unlikely Kisch is correct. The historian Monika Richarz in her book "Die Eintritt der Juden in die Akademischen Berufe" (J.C.B. Mohr, 1974), identifies Adolf Bernhard Marx as the son of Moses Marx (p. 91). This certainly makes more sense biologically; it also is supported by the memoirs of Adolf Bernhard Marx himself, who describes his father as an atheist, a confirming fact which identifies Moses Marx, who refused to take the required oaths of admission to the medical profession in a religious setting.

was the son-in-law of Assur Marx. His father was the atheist doctor, Moses Marx.

The two-volume memoirs of Adolf Bernhard Marx are in the collection of the Library of Congress (Call Number ML 423 M.39), from which I received microfilm copies in August 1982.

These memoirs shed little light on the history of our family. Marx refers to his father, the doctor, and to his mother; he mentions he is a scion of rabbinical families, but never gives the names of those family members. Similarly, in a chapter devoted to his wife, Theresa, he fails to mention her last name and includes no reference to her family. In describing an episode involving a newborn son, there is no mention of the son's name.

Marx moved to Berlin where a number of the descendants of Assur Marx lived, and although he describes his relations with people in Berlin, he mentions only one relative, a Sofie Coffmann; how she is related to our family I have not been able to determine. In his later years Adolf Marx took a trip through Europe, writing especially about the beauty of the Thueringer forests. Nowhere is there any reference to his cousins (and our ancestors), the Cohn family, who lived in that region of Germany. He may well have been unaware of their existence. At any rate, his memoirs are of little value as far as family history is concerned, but they are fascinating as a document of the times.

The early chapters of the memoirs describe the life of Adolf Marx as a young Jewish boy in Halle, his early attraction to music and art and his father's encouragement of those interests. Adolf Marx obviously regarded himself as a member of the Hallenser upper class, and there is no hint of discrimination or repression against his person in his writing.*

Notwithstanding the fact his father was an atheist and a great admirer of Voltaire and his philosophy, the family made it a practice to attend services at the Synagogue. Marx describes the majesty and solemnity of High Holy Day services, but even as a young boy he discerned hypocrisy among the worshipers. He observed that during the Yom Kippur services, some of the richly dressed women (who sat separately from the men) would feel faint from the fast and retire to a small anteroom set aside for them. While recuperating there, a maid would appear miraculously, bearing refreshments; shortly thereafter the good ladies would appear in the Synagogue and virtuously resume their prayers.

While Adolf Marx was still a small boy, the armies of Napoleon

*However, see his reference to the Jewish communities as "suppressed" in other portions of his memoirs.

overran virtually all of Prussia. He describes in detail a battle in a small village near Halle and the entry of Napoleon into that city, which he watched from the arms of his father. He reacted strongly to the experience as the ardent German patriot he would be all his life.

When Marx was about 20 years of age he made the decision to convert to Protestantism, the dominant religion of Halle and Prussia. His father was appalled and the son could not understand why. He writes that his father, as a true disciple of Voltaire, regarded all religions as "humbug". But, the son points out, his father as a matter of honor would not leave the community, "a community which was suppressed and lacked certain civil rights". When he informed his father that he had made arrangements for his baptism, and after all of his father's opposition was to no avail, the memoirs report the following:

The already aged man laid down on his bed and declared that this was his deathbed, if I converted to Christianity. I, on the other hand, had completed my studies in the Christian faith and the day of baptism was set. I felt an inner conviction that his threat was the expression of a momentary mood, without significance and went to the altar of the church. Father remained healthy and lived for many more years.

The conversion did not appear to affect Marx' relationship with his parents. His father attempted to obtain appointments at local courts for him when he became a jurist, and the son indicates several times in his memoirs that he contributed financially to the support of his parents in their later years.

Marx maintains that the Requiem of Mozart and the Messiah of Handel led him to Christianity. Nevertheless, he continued to read and study the Old Testament, and much of his subsequent musical work was based on themes from that source. The conversion of Marx may have been out of deep personal conviction, but in all fairness it should be pointed out that while the legal career contemplated by him (and urged by his father) was viable, appointments in the judiciary were open only to members of the Protestant church in Prussia.

Marx' interest in the law is attributed by him in part to his desire to redress injustices he had seen as a boy. He relates vividly witnessing the execution of a thief in the company of his father who was the attending physician; he felt deeply that injustice had been done in this case.

Later, after serving at the court in Naumburg, a town near Halle, he felt he lacked the "clout" in the local courts to make a career of the law there; thereupon, he decided to try for an opening in the Ap-

peals Court (Kammergericht) in Berlin, and succeeded in the effort.

The intellectual life of Berlin in the early 1800's was dominated by the "salons" of several Jewish women, where artists, intellectuals and scientists gathered and mingled with "society". The ladies were uniformly rich, intelligent and beautiful and invariably descendants of Court Jews. Marx was introduced into this circle but never felt comfortable in it, and after a short time, discontinued his visits to the "salons".

By the time Marx reached his late twenties he realized he could not serve two masters, and that to be successful he had to devote all of his energies and indeed his whole being to his calling. And his calling was music. He left the legal profession and concentrated on his music. He received a doctorate in music from the University of Marburg and returned to live in Berlin. Here, he became the editor of the "Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung", the first periodical devoted exclusively to music. He edited the paper from 1824 to 1830, when the enterprise failed. In the course of this publishing experience, he wrote frequently as a critic. Somewhat naively, he expressed surprise in his memoirs that he had lost the friendship of musicians of whom he had been critical.

In 1830 Adolf Bernhard Marx was appointed Professor of Music at the University of Berlin, the first to occupy that chair. He had been recommended by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, who had declined the offer. A deep and abiding friendship had grown between Marx and Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Marx devotes two chapters of his memoirs to describe this relationship. He felt comfortable in the home of the Mendelssohns which reflected the culture and wealth of these descendants of Moses Mendelssohn, the founder of modern Judaism. Marx describes somewhat enviously the strong support this family gave to their gifted son not only emotionally but financially, and compares this support with his own situation. The house of his own father, he writes, "had gone from its former prosperity to a state of distress". He felt an obligation to support his parents and one of the reasons for accepting the professorship in Berlin was the security it offered and the means by which he could fulfill his obligation.

The reference to the state "of distress" in which the house of Marx found itself is interesting. Halle had suffered greatly as a consequence of the succession of wars since the middle of the 18th century. The Jewish population had declined to no more than 150 souls in 1810, and this may seriously have affected the practice of Marx' father, the "community" doctor (Gemeindearzt) in Halle. Whether the financial misfortune of the family was caused by the unsettled economy of Halle or by more personal problems is not clear.

The close friendship between Adolf Marx and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy came to an abrupt end in 1841 when Mendelssohn refused to conduct "Moses", an oratorio composed by Marx, in Leipzig where Mendelssohn was the conductor. The oratorio was not a success. It was performed in Weimar under the baton of Liszt, the only musical figure of any importance who rallied to the support of Marx.

Although Adolf Marx was not successful as a composer, he was greatly esteemed as a writer of textbooks on music, as a teacher, and as an ardent proponent of the works of Beethoven, Handel and Bach. He was aware that his own musical compositions, and especially the Moses Oratorio, would be more acceptable to public taste if he would make certain concessions in his style, but this he refused to do, as his memoirs make clear.

These memoirs hardly mention his most enduring achievement. In 1850, he founded, with the musicians Kullak and Stern, the Berliner Musikschule, a Conservatory of Music. He served the school as a teacher until his retirement in 1856. The institution is still in existence today in Berlin, under the name "Stern'sches Konser-vatorium".

Adolf Bernhard Marx met and had relationships with most of the great figures in the musical and literary world of his day. He formed a lasting friendship with Spontini, director of the Berlin Opera, who is little remembered today. Among those who appear in the life of Marx, are the well-known figures of Heine, Weber, Paganini, Liszt, Wagner, and, of course, Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. There is an interesting footnote in a dissertation delivered at the University of Cologne in 1966 by K. E. Eicke, who states that on a visit with Marx in Berlin in 1847, Richard Wagner was taken by the natural beauty and charm of Theresa, the wife of Marx.

Many of the works composed by Marx were choral music, both religious as well as secular. These compositions won Marx an audience with his King, Frederick William IV, sometime in the 1840's, during which the monarch assured him of support in the formation of various choral groups in Prussia. Little came of this promise. (It is of some interest to note that about this same time, the brother-in-law of a distant cousin of Marx was granted an audience at the Court of St. James. This was one Mandel, the brother of our ancestress Henrietta Mandel, who was married to Louis Marcus Cohn in Schmalkalden. Mandel was a representative of the Rothschilds in Milan.)

Many of the writings of Adolf Bernhard Marx may be found in the original German and in English translations in the libraries of our universities. A listing of his works, both musical and literary,

appears in the appended biographical excerpt from Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1980 edition. Other biographies can be found in encyclopedias of music, as well as in most Jewish encyclopedias; many of these include a picture of the man.

Eicke describes Adolf Bernhard Marx as something of an intellectual snob, a man of uncompromising personality and not easily and comfortably approachable socially. After reading his memoirs, I came away with the same impression. However, this Marx, like several of his ancestors, was a remarkable man, but unlike them, eschewed the world of commerce and elected to spend his life in a cultural and intellectual milieu where he achieved more than a modest measure of success.

From:
The New Grove Dictionary of Music
and Musicians.
1980 Edition.
Pages 739 and 740.

Marx, Adolf Bernhard (b Halle, 28 Nov 1795; d Berlin, 17 May 1866). German music theorist, author and composer of Jewish extraction. His father, a doctor in Halle, encouraged his interests in literature, music and art, but provided no formal lessons. As a schoolboy he studied Türk's *Clavierschule* by himself, and during law studies in Halle he and Carl Loewe, a childhood friend, took thoroughbass lessons from Türk. After a brief career as a lawyer in Naumburg and Berlin, he concentrated his attention on music as editor of the *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (1824–30). In Berlin he continued composition studies with Zelter, but was dissatisfied with his teaching and soon stopped lessons; moreover, the friendship with Zelter was broken when Marx published two articles strongly critical of the poor state of Zelter's *Singakademie* (*Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 1824, no.17, p.152; 1827, no.25, p.193). A close friendship with Mendelssohn in Berlin also gradually cooled, and ended when Mendelssohn refused to perform Marx's oratorio *Moses* (1841) in Leipzig. After receiving a doctorate from the University of Marburg in 1828, Marx lectured at the University of Berlin, was appointed professor of music in 1830 (on Mendelssohn's recommendation) and director of music in 1832. In 1850 he founded, with Kullak and Stern, the Berliner Musikscole, later known as the Stern'sches Konservatorium. He retired from the Musikscole in 1856.

Marx's compositions include a great number of songs and minor choral works, two oratorios, two cantatas, a Singspiel, a melodrama, a book of 235 chorale harmonizations and a few piano and orchestral works. The best complete list of his compositions is that in Hirschberg (1908–9). With the exception of his oratorio *Moses*, which was performed many times (e.g. by Liszt in Weimar in 1853), Marx's compositions were soon forgotten. Schumann showed some interest in his early works (NZM, 1837, 1841), but criticized *Moses* sharply. Marx's enthusiasm for Handel and Bach, which he shared with Mendelssohn and Zelter, led to the publication of numerous Baroque works, most notably his vocal scores of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (1830) and B minor Mass (1834).

allgemeine musikalische Zeitung. Despite much romanticizing, the biographies of Beethoven (1859) and Gluck (1863) are very thorough and give a full impression of the 19th-century view of these composers. The performance guide to Beethoven's piano works (1863), originally part of the Beethoven biography, was later published separately.

See also ANALYSIS, §§1, 3.

WORKS

For an extensive list, including projected, incomplete and lost works, see Hirschberg.

SACRED CHORAL

Orch acc.: Der 137. Psalm, 1827; 2 lateinische Kirchenlieder, 1840; *Mose*, oratorio, op.10, 1841 (Leipzig, 1844); Zur Zeit der Auferstehung, 1842–3; *Festkantate zur Jubelfeier der Universität*, 1860

Pf/organ acc.: Evangelisches Choral- und Orgelbuch, op.3 (Berlin, 1832); Am Tage Johannes des Täufers, oratorio, 1834; Psalm 1, op.5 (Berlin, 1837); Meine Seele ist stille zu Gott (from ps 1xx), op.17 (Minden, 1846); In banger Zeit, op.19 (Minden, 1846); Gebet um Kirchenfrieden (Mars), op.21 (Berlin, 1847)

A cappella: *De profundis*, 1823; 2 Motetten, op.4 (Berlin, 1834); Gebet für die Verstorbenen (Requiem int.), op.7 (Leipzig, 1841); [3] Festgesänge, op.27 (Leipzig, 1858)

SECULAR CHORAL

Das Siegesmahl (H. Sieglitz), male chorus, orch, 1826; 3 Chorgesänge, chorus, pf, op.1 (Leipzig, 1830); *Carmen quae natalicium*, 2 male choruses, orch, 1833; *Die Schmiede des Prometheus* (Goethe), 4 male vv, pf, op.6 (Leipzig, 1841); *Morgenruf* (G. Herwegh), 8 male vv, op.23 (Minden, 1848); [62] *Gesänge aus der Chorschule* (Leipzig, 1860) [incl. 51 orig. works; others arr. Marx]

Part songs: *Ruhe, süß Liebchen (Tieck)*, 4vv, op.15 (Leipzig, 1846); *Wanderlied* (W. Müller), 4vv, op.18 (Leipzig, 1846); *6 Gesänge*, 4 male vv, op.25 (Minden, 1848); 6 *Gesänge*, 4vv, op.26 (Minden, 1848)

SONGS

(all with piano accompaniment)

12 *Gesänge*, op.2 (Leipzig, 1830); *Nahid und Omar*, cycle of 9 songs, op.9 (Berlin, 1844); *Die Zigeunerinnen* (Mühlbach), S. A., op.13 (Leipzig, 1845); *Ein Frühlingspiel* (Heine), op.14 (Leipzig, 1845); [12] *Spanische Lieder* (trans. Giebel), op.22 (Berlin, 1847); *Hinaus mein Lied* (W. Witte), Bar, pf solo, op.24 (Minden, 1849); *Meiden und Finden* (K. Marelli), with vc, 1860

PIANO

Am Nordgestade, fantasia, pf 4-hands, op.11 (Leipzig, 1845); Um Mitternacht, fantasia, pf 4-hands, op.12 (Leipzig, 1845); *Große Sonate*, A, pf solo, op.16 (Leipzig, 1846)

WRITINGS

Über Logiers Musik-System, *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, ii (1825), 25; vii (1830), 413

Über das Konzertwesen, *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, ii (1825), 349

Die Kunst des Gesangs, theoreatisch-praktisch (Berlin, 1826)

'Hamann', *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, iv (1827), 309

Über die 'Geltung Händelscher Sologezeuge für unsere Zeit: ein Nachtrag' (Berlin, 1828) [suppl. to *Die Kunst des Gesangs*]

Über Malerei in der Tonkunst: ein Meingruss an die Kunsthilosophen (Berlin, 1828)

Übersicht der wesentlichen Gattungen des musikalischen Dramas', *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, v (1828), 195

'Eine Betrachtung über den heutigen Zustand der deutschen Oper', *Cecilia*, vii (1828), 115–82

Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch, i (Leipzig, 1837, rev. 7/1887, 10/1903; Eng. trans., 1852); ii (Leipzig, 1837, rev. 7/1890); iii (Leipzig, 1845, 5/1879); iv (Leipzig, 1847, rev. 5/1888; Eng. trans., 1910)

Allgemeine Musiklehre (Leipzig, 1839, 10/1884)

'Der Ruf unserer Zeit an die Musiker', *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*, ii (1848), 145

'Denkschrift über Organisation des Musikwesens im preussischen Staate', *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung*, ii (1848), 241 [pubd separately (Berlin, 1848)]

Die Musik des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts und ihre Pflege: Methode der Musik (Leipzig, 1855, 2/1873; Eng. trans., 1855)

Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen (Berlin, 1859, 7/1907–10)

Vollständige Chorschule (Leipzig, 1860)

Gluck und die Oper (Berlin, 1863, 2/1866 as Gluck's Leben und Schaffen)

Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethoven'scher Klavierwerke (Berlin, 1863, 5/1912; Eng. trans., 1895)

Erinnerungen: aus meinem Leben (Berlin, 1865)

Das Ideal und die Gegenwart (Jena, 1867)

ed. L. Hirschberg: Musikalische Schriften über Tondichter und Tonkunst (Hildburghausen, 1912–22) [collection of most of Marx's important contributions to *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

J. T. Mosevius: 'Über das Oratorium *Moses* von A. B. Marx', *AMZ*, xiv (1842), 933

T. Marx: 'A. B. Marx' Verhältniss zu Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig, 1869)

G. F. Selle: 'Aus A. B. Marx' literarischen Nachlass (Berlin, 1898)

L. Hirschberg: 'Der Tondichter A. B. Marx', *SIMG*, x (1908–9), 1–72 [includes list of works]

A. Schmitz: 'Das romantische Beethovenbild' (Berlin, 1927)

G. Kähler: 'Studien zur Entstehung der Formenlehre in der Musiktheorie des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts' (diss., U. of Heidelberg, 1958)

A. Edler: 'Zur Musikanschauung von Adolf Bernhard Marx', *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Musikanschauung im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. W. Salmen (Regensburg, 1965), 103

H. Kirchmeyer: 'Ein Kapitel Adolf Bernhard Marx: über Sendungsbewusstsein und Bildungsstand der Berliner Musikistik zwischen 1824 und 1830', ibid, 73

K.-E. Eicke: 'Der Streit zwischen A. B. Marx und G. W. Fink um die Kompositionstheorie' (diss., U. of Cologne, 1966)

M. Göck: 'Die Wiederentdeckung der Matthäuspassion im 19. Jahrhundert' (Regensburg, 1967), 15–74

B. Moyer: 'Concepts of Musical Form in the Nineteenth Century with Special Reference to A. B. Marx and Sonata Form' (diss., Stanford U., 1969)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The titles of German books and articles are listed with their German title followed in parenthesis by an English translation of that title. An * following the title indicates that the book or article contains references to our ancestors Assur Marx or Marx Assur. Explanatory notes are added to some items of the bibliography to afford the reader a better understanding of the times and background.

In cases of rare books — those published in the 19th or 18th century — the library which made that book available is identified.

Carsten, F.L.

The Court Jews
Article in Yearbook III of the Leo Baeck Institute
East and West Library, London. 1958

Dreyhaupt, Johann Christoph von

*Ausfuhrliche diplomatische und historische Beschreibung des Saal Creyses**
(Detailed Political and Historical Description of the County Saale)
Emanuel Schreiber, Halle. 1755
Three copies of this book are believed to exist. One of them is at the Harper Library of the University of Chicago.

Deetz, Peter

*Hofjuden**
(Court Jews)
Julius Streicher. 1939

This book was published under the auspices of one of the most evil of the Nazis. It is full of anti-Semitic views but the author shows an astonishing knowledge of the families of the Court Jews in the 18th century.

Eckstein, A.

Geschichte der Juden im ehemaligen Fürstbistum Bamberg.
(History of the Jews in the Former Princely Diocese of Bamberg).
Handelsdruckerei, Bamberg. 1898
“Fürst”, or prince, indicates the archbishop was the temporal as well as the spiritual ruler.
Copy of the book is at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.

Eicke, K.E.

Der Streit zwischen A.B. Marx und G.W. Fink um die Kompositionslere.
(The Dispute between A.B. Marx and G.W. Fink on teaching composition).
Dissertation at the University of Cologne. 1966

Freudenthal, Max

*Leipziger Messgäste. Die jüdischen Besucher der Leipziger Messen in den Jahren 1675 - 1764.**
(Guests at the Fair in Leipzig. The Jewish Visitors at the Leipzig Fair in the years 1675 - 1764).
J. Kauffman Verlag, Frankfurt/Main 1928

For centuries the Fair in Leipzig was the most important trade fair in Europe. It is still being held, though its importance has declined because of the political division of Europe into democratic and communist countries. Leipzig is in East Germany.

Assur Marx and Marx Assur as well as their family members, wives, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters, are recorded in this book as frequent visitors from 1692 to 1752. It is reasonable to assume that even in those years Freudenthal does not list Assur Marx (and later Marx Assur) as a visitor Assur Marx (or Marx Assur) attended the Fair.

Among the privileges granted to Assur Marx in 1701 by the ruler of Saxony was a free pass to the Fair and holders of free passes were not recorded by the Fair authorities.

Aus der Heimat Mendelssohn's.*

(Mendelssohn's Native Land)
Berlin, 1900.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729 - 1786), philosopher of German enlightenment, became spiritual leader of German Jewry at the dawn of emancipation. He translated the Bible into German, albeit, in accordance with the custom of the times, the book was printed with Hebrew characters. Mendelssohn was born in Dessau, a small town near Halle. Despite the fact that many of his six children and their children converted to Christianity, Mendelssohn remained a revered figure of German Jewry.

His grandson, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, was a close friend of Adolf Bernhard Marx, a great-grandson of Assur Marx. (See the chapter on Adolf Bernhard Marx).

Gericke, Werner und Marsch, Friedrich

*Halle's Minderheiten — Die israelitische Kultusgemeinde**
(Halle's Minorities — The Jewish Congregation)
A manuscript sponsored by the Association of former Hallenser living in West Germany. 1981

Groneman, S.

Genealogische Studien über die alten jüdischen Familien Hannovers.
(Genealogical Studies about the Old Jewish Families of Hannover).
Berlin, 1913

The library of Spertus College has a copy of this book.

Graetz, Heinrich

Popular History of the Jews. Vol. 5
Translated from the German by Rabbi Rhine.
Hebrew Publishing Company. 1930

Hallendorf, Carl Jacob Herman

History of Sweden, Chapter: The Age of Freedom and the Gustavian Era 1718-1815.
Translated by Mrs. Lajla Yapp.

C.E. Fritze, Ltd. Stockholm 1929

Hertzberg, Gustav Friedrich

Geschichte der Stadt Halle an der Saale von den Anfängen bis zur Neuzeit.
Band 3: *Halle während des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts. 1717 - 1872.**
(History of the City of Halle on the Saale from the Beginning to Modern Times.
Vol 3: Halle during the 18th and 19th Centuries. 1717 — 1872).
Halle, 1893.

Texts relating to Marx Assur were transcribed by Willy Unger (East Berlin).

Jacobson, Jacob
Die Judenbucher der Stadt Berlin.
Veröffentlichung der Berliner Historischen Kommission. Band 4.
(The Jewish Register of the City of Berlin. A Publication of the Historical Commission of Berlin. Vol 4).
Walter de Gruyter Co., Berlin W. 30 1962

Jellinek, Dr. Adolf
Martyr und Memorbuch
Wien, 1881.
The book is in Hebrew and contains an apparent reference to our first known ancestor, Rabbi Moshe, in the section containing the memorbooks of Deutz and the district of Cologne during the early 1600's.
A copy of the book is at the YIVO Institute of New York.

Kaganoff, Benjion G.
Dictionary of Jewish Names and Their History.
Schocken Books, 1977

Kisch, Guido
Rechts und Sozialgeschichte der Juden in Halle 1686 - 1730
*Veröffentlichung der Berliner Historischen Kommission. Band 32.**
(Legal and Socio-economic History of the Jews in Halle 1686 - 1730. A Publication of the Historical Commission of Berlin. Vol. 32).
Berlin, 1970
This book is the basic and most complete source for the history of our family in the 18th century.

Kober, Adolf
History of the Jews of Cologne.
Jewish Publication Society, 1940.

Lehmann, Emil
Der polnische Resident Behrend Lehmann, der Stammvater der israelitischen Religionsgemeinde zu Dresden.
(The Polish (Royal) Agent Behrend Lehmann, the Founder of the Jewish Congregation at Dresden).
Dresden, 1885.
A copy of this book is at the library of Spertus College of Judaica in Chicago.

Mainzer, Martin
*Besuch bei Verwandten**
(Visit with Relatives)
Fedor Wilisch, Schmalkalden. 1930.
This was a high school paper describing an imaginary trip back in time by means of a miraculous time machine. It was published by my grandmother, Sofie Hecht Cohn. The German National Library at Leipzig has a copy, another copy is in my own library.

Marcus, Jacob Rader
The Jew in the Medieval World. 315 - 1791
The Union of Hebrew Congregations, Cincinnati. 1938.
Communal Sick Care in the German Ghetto.
Hebrew Union College Press. Cincinnati. 1961.

Marx, Adolf Bernhard
Erinnerungen. Aus meinem Leben.
(Remembrances. From My Life)
Otto Jahnke, Berlin, 1865.

The Library of Congress has a copy of this book. A microfilm copy of this book was donated to the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.
Photocopies of the microfilm are in my library.

Neuss, Erich und Piechoki, Werner
Halle an der Saale.
Sachsenverlag, Dresden, 1959.

Richarz, Monika
*Der Eintritt der Juden in die akademischen Berufe.**
(The Entry of Jews into the Professions).
A publication of the Leo Baeck Institute, London.
J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebert), Tuebingen. 1974.

Roth, Cecil
A Short History of the Jews
East and West Library, London SW 7. 1961

Schnee, Heinrich
Die Hoffnanz und der moderne Staat.
*Geschichte und System der Hoffaktoren an Deutschen Furstenhofen im Zeitalter des Absolutismus.**
(Court Finances and the Modern State. History and System of the Hoffaktors at German Princely Courts in the Period of the Absolute State).
Berlin, 1953.

The work consists of three volumes. References to Assur Marx and Marx Assur are in Vol. 2. Kisch criticizes Schnee for an anti-Semitic undertone in some chapters. Schnee gives considerable more detail about financial transactions than any of the other authors who deal with the subject of Court Jews. For our family history Schnee's work was a most valuable source.

Schudt, Johann Jakob
*Judische Merkwürdigkeiten.**
(Jewish Peculiarities)
Frankfurt/Main, 1714
Republished Berlin, 1922.

Schudt (1664 - 1722) was an orientalist, well versed in Hebrew and Hebraic writings. (See Note 16). He became headmaster of a college in Frankfurt in 1717. He was active in a movement to convert Jews to Christianity and apparently had close connections with the Jewish community in Frankfurt. His writings were strongly anti-Semitic. In the chapter in which he maligns Assur Marx he implies that thievery was one of the main occupations of Jews and maintained that Jewish children were trained to steal religious artifacts from churches.

Despite his comments, his works remain one of the best sources of information about Jewish life and customs in the 18th century, particularly about Jewish life in Frankfurt.

Although the German of 300 years ago is not easy to read, I also went through his chapter about Jews in Amsterdam in my search for our ancestor there. In this chapter, Schudt faults the Dutch for giving civil rights to Jews and not curtailing their economic power. He also violently attacks Spinoza, in that respect finding

himself in agreement with the Jewish community of the time.
A copy of the 1922 edition of this book is at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.

Shulvass, Moses A.
From East to West
Wayne State University Press 1971

Schultze-Gallera, Baron Dr. Siegmar von
Die Juden zu Halle im Mittelalter
(The Jews in Halle during the Middle Ages)
Karras und Koennecke, Halle, 1922.

An extensive and detailed history of the Jewish settlements in Halle from early times to the voluntary liquidation of that community in the 1480's.
The book is marred by violent anti-Semitic diatribes.

Simons, Ernst
Geschichte der juedischen Gemeinden im Bonner Raum
(History of the Jewish Communities in Bonn and Vicinity).
W. Knauth, Bonn. 1959.

Stern-Taubler, Selma
*The Court Jews**
Translated from the German manuscript by Ralph Weiman.
The Jewish Publication Society of America. 1950

*Der preussische Staat und die Juden**
2 Bände.
(The Prussian State and the Jews, 2 Volumes).
First published in 1952.
Republished in Tübingen in 1962.
Quotations are from the 1962 edition.

The First Generation of Emancipated Jews
Article in Yearbook XV of the Leo Baeck Institute, 1970.

Tykocinski, H.
Die ältesten Nachrichten über die Juden in Halle.
(The Earliest Reports about the Jews in Halle)
Article in "Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums"
(MGWJ). 1913.

Zunz, Leopold
*Zur Geschichte und Literatur. Band I**
(Of History and Literature. Vol. I)
Berlin, 1845.
The library of Spertus College of Judaica in Chicago has a copy of this book.
Reference to Marx Assur's library of Hebrew writings appears on page 239.

OTHER REFERENCES

The following encyclopedias were used as source material:
Encyclopedia Judaica — 1970 Edition*
This edition mentions Assur Marx and Marx Assur on page 1010, in an article about Court Jews
Judisches Lexikon — 1929 Edition
Germania Judaica
Brockhaus Lexikon — 1974 Edition

Encyclopaedia Britannica — 15th Edition
Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians — 1980 Edition
The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia — 1969 Edition
Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians — 1978 Edition

Recommended Reading

JUD SUESS, a novel by Lion Feuchtwanger. The book appeared in the U.S. under the title POWER in 1927. It is the dramatic story of Joseph Oppenheimer (1698 - 1738), one of the most flamboyant and powerful Court Jews. After his prince's sudden death he was condemned to death by hanging in what clearly was a case of judicial murder.

A nephew of the author, Klaus Feuchtwanger, lived in Halle and was a boyhood friend of mine. He became a medical doctor and died in New York State in 1982. I had no contact with him after leaving Germany.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

THE MARX-COHN FAMILY
DIRECT LINEAGE TO 1983

1	Rabbi Moshe Died in 1627 in Deutz (near Cologne), after serving as Chief Rabbi for the Cologne District for forty years. Spouse : Unknown Issue : Undetermined, except for direct ancestor:
II	Rabbi Mordecai Died in 1681 in Konigswinter (German Rhineland). Spouse : Unknown Issue : Four sons and four daughters, including direct ancestor:
III	Assur Marx Also identified as Rabbi Asher ben Mordecai and Asher Cohn Maus. Founded modern Jewish community in Halle in 1688. Born : 5 Adar 5414 (1654) in Emmerich (Dutch/German border) Died : 17 Elul 5496 (1736) in Halle Spouse : GNENDEL (Marriage in 1685 in Hannover) Born : Unknown Died : 1725 in Halle Issue : Five sons and five daughters, including direct ancestor:
IV	Marx Assur Also identified as Rabbi Mordecai ben Asher. Born : 11 Tishri 5447 (1686) in Halle Died : 5 Cheshvan 5523 (1762) in Furth, Bavaria where he had been taken as a hostage in 1759. Spouse : GELLA MOSES (marriage in 1706 in Amsterdam) Born : 1691 in Amersterdam (Netherlands) Died : 1744 in Halle Issue : Three sons and three daughters, including direct ancestor:
V	Rabbi Aaron Marx Born : 5 Shevat 5468 (1708) in Halle Died : 10 Av 5537 (1777) in Schleusingen (Thuringia) Spouse : KREINLE MISSELFELD Born : Unknown Died : 21 Av 5505 (1745) in Schleusingen Issue : Five sons, including direct ancestor:

VI	Rabbi Goetz Marx Born : 6 Tishri 5496 (1735) in Schleusingen Died : 1780 in Schleusingen Spouse : SCHENDEL, daughter of Rabbi Moshe in Bamberg (Bavaria) Born : Unknown Died : 1776 in Schleusingen Issue : Two daughters and direct ancestor:
VII	Moses Marx, known after 1807 as Moses Marcus Cohn Born : 26 October 1773 in Schleusingen Died : 18 October 1829 in Schmalkalden (Thuringia) Spouse : SERAFINE BERLIN from Furth (Bavaria) (marriage: 24 June 1810. Moses' second marriage) Born : Unknown Died : 23 January 1816 Issue : Two sons and one daughter. (A second daughter was born to Moses Cohn during his third marriage in 1817 to Caroline Mond, who died in 1867)
VIII	Louis Marcus Cohn Born : 12 November 1813 in Schmalkalden Died : 6 September 1877 in Schmalkalden Spouse : HENRIETTA MANDEL (marriage on 8 March 1843 in Schmalkalden) Born : 15 April 1824 in Schmalkalden Died : 17 February 1887 in Schmalkalden Issue : Eight sons and four daughters, including direct ancestor:
IX	Wilhelm Markus Cohn Born : 9 March 1854 in Schmalkalden Died : 8 May 1926 in Schmalkalden Spouse : SOFIE HECHT (marriage on 1 September 1890 in Bad Salzungen) Born : 20 July 1865 in Stadtlegsfeld Died : 12 February 1938 in Halle, buried in Schmalkalden Issue : One son, Ludwig Marcus Cohn, killed in WWI before Verdun in 1917, and one daughter, our ancestress:
X	Herta Cohn Born : 9 January 1895 in Schmalkalden Died : 29 August 1967 in Chicago, Illinois Spouse : HUGO MAINZER (marriage on 27 April, 1914 in Erfurt, Germany) Born : 29 December 1881 in Bad Kissingen (Bavaria) Died : 6 January, 1960 in Chicago, Illinois Issue : Martin Mainzer Ludwig (later Lewis) Mainzer Elisabeth Mainzer

From Generation to Generation

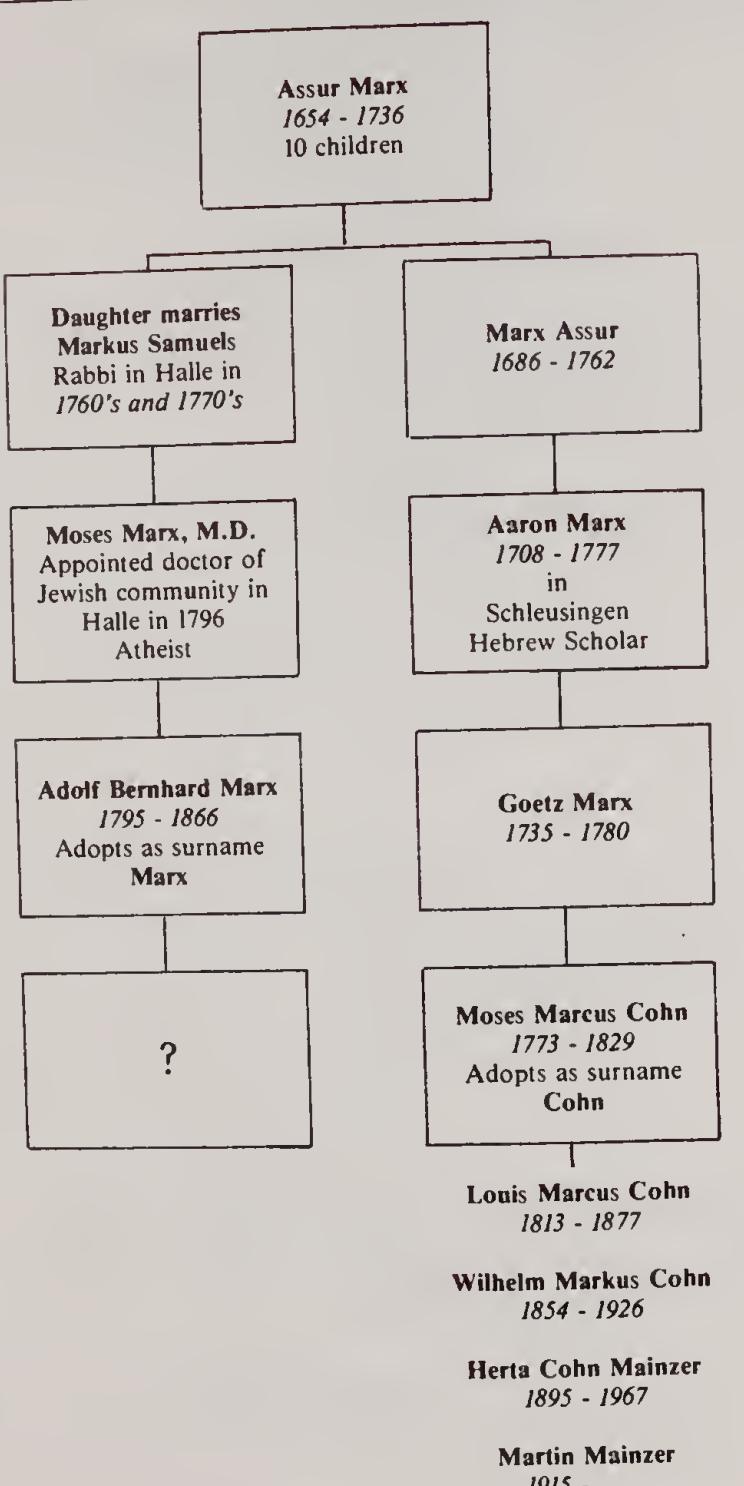
XI	Martin Mainzer Born : 22 February 1915 in Halle Spouse : IBOLYA HERSKOVITS since 1939 IBOLYA HERST (married on 18 October 1943 in Chicago) Born : 20 October 1918 in Szomotor, Czechoslovakia Issue : Susan Eileen Mainzer Sharon Eve Mainzer Bruce William Mainzer David Mark Mainzer Sandra Elizabeth Mainzer
XI - 2	Ludwig Mainzer since 1936 Lewis Mainzer Born : 22 February 1917 in Halle Spouse : ANNELIESE HESSE (second marriage on 26 December 1949 in Chicago) Born : 26 October 1918 in Bielefeld (Germany) Died : 5 May 1956 in Chicago Issue : James Michael Mainzer Spouse : ESTHER SHALLON (third marriage on 26 September 1957 in Chicago) Born : 13 October 1917 in New York City
XI - 3	Elisabeth Mainzer Born : 30 January 1922 in Halle Died : 2 May 1944 in Montevideo, Uruguay Spouse : ERNST MOOS (married in 1942 in Montevideo) Born : 1919 in Halle Issue : None
XII - 1.1	Susan Eileen Mainzer Born : 12 November 1945 in Chicago Spouse : JEFFREY MARK RUBIN (married on 26 December 1971 in Winnetka, Illinois) Born : 26 December 1943 in New York City Issue : Aaron Michael Rubin Lauren Herta Rubin Diana Rose Rubin
XII - 1.2	Sharon Eve Mainzer Born : 28 July 1949 in Chicago
XII - 1.3	Bruce William Mainzer Born : 4 June 1952 in Chicago Spouse : BETH SHADUR (married on 12 October 1980 in Chicago) Born : 17 May 1954 in Chicago
XII - 1.4	David Mark Mainzer Born : 13 March 1955 in Chicago

From Generation to Generation

*Compiled by Martin Mainzer
1983*

From Generation to Generation

ADOLF BERNHARD MARX
COMMON ANCESTRY WITH COHN FAMILY







**End of From generation to
generation :**
